



795 M13o (2)

---

## Keep Your Card in This Pocket

---

Books will be issued only on presentation of proper library cards.

Unless labeled otherwise, books may be retained for two weeks. Borrowers finding books marked, defaced or mutilated are expected to report same at library desk; otherwise the last borrower will be held responsible for all imperfections discovered.

The card holder is responsible for all books drawn on this card.

Penalty for over-due books 2c a day plus cost of notices.

Lost cards and change of residence must be reported promptly.



**Public Library**  
**Kansas City, Mo.**

---

TENSION ENVELOPE CORP.

---



3 1148 00316 4779

APR 17 1980

MAY 1

WEP

NOV 2 1987

SEP 3 1976

MAY FEB 4 1978



MACDOUGALL ON PINOCHLE

*ALSO BY MICHAEL MacDOUGALL*

MACDOUGALL ON DICE AND CARDS

*MacDougall on*

# PINOCHLE

By MICKEY MacDOUGALL

COWARD-McCANN, INC., NEW YORK

COPYRIGHT, 1947, BY SAMUEL MICHAEL MACDOUGALL

*All rights reserved. This book, or parts thereof, must  
not be reproduced in any form without permission.*

*Published simultaneously in the Dominion of Can-  
ada by Longmans, Green and Company, Toronto.*

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



# CONTENTS

## 1. PINOCHLE 1

The Pinochle Deck

## 2. AUCTION PINOCHLE 5

The Stakes, The Deal, The Widow, The Bid, The Meld, Trump, To Play or Not to Play, The Burial, The Play, The Count, The Kitty, Spades Double, Hearts Triple, Dealer Stays Out, The Score, Misdeal, Incorrect Hands, Improper Bidding, Exposed Cards, The Revoke, Better Bidding, Possibilities of the Widow, Unseen Value, Better Playing, Better Timing, The Safety Play in Trump, Better Discarding, Better Defense, Distribution

## 3. TWO-HANDED PINOCHLE 53

Rules of the Meld, Penalties and Misdeals, Two-handed Scoring, The Call-Out, Doubles, Two-handed Pinochle Three-handed, Better Play, Goulash

## 4. PARTNERSHIP PINOCHLE 67

The Play, The Score, Penalties, Firehouse, Partnership Auction Pinochle, Partnership Pinochle—Corners

## 5. CHECK PINOCHLE 74

Original Bidding, Original Scoring, Modern Bidding, Modern Scoring, The Play, Strategy,

1950

1950

MAR 28 1950

Bidding Conventions, Informational Bidding,  
Responses to Opening Bids, Overcalls, Pen-  
alties

6. CHEATING AT PINOCHLE 86

Cheating at Auction, Cheating at Four-  
handed Auction, Cheating at Two-handed  
Pinochle, Cheating at Goulash

# I. PINOCHLE

PINOCHLE—a card game, probably of German origin. So says the dictionary. In reality, the name Pinochle is given to three distinctly different games: Two-handed Pinochle, Auction Pinochle, and Check Pinochle, which differ from each other quite as much as they do from their parent game, Bezique.

All three games use the same deck of cards; they have similar values and counts. But there the likeness ends. Each game has separate rules and conventions of its own.

Two-handed Pinochle is a head-to-head battle of intellects; Auction Pinochle is a group game with hazards. There is as much difference between the two as there is between chess and checkers. As for Check Pinochle—that is a combination of Auction Pinochle and Bridge, with rules drawn from each.

Of the trio, Two-handed Pinochle came first. When Auction Pinochle was developed, many of the rules and regulations used in the two-handed game were thrust upon the newcomer. Because of the fundamental difference between the two games, some of these laws proved unworkable. Therefore the Auction players adopted new and better rules.

Then, when those who were introduced first to Auction Pinochle took up Two-handed Pinochle, they kept the changes. This movement back and forth accounts for the divergence in rules and values.

The net result has been that both Two-handed Pi-

nochle and Auction Pinochle are played with numerous variations, to suit the times, the customs, and the temperament of the players.

The modern game of Check Pinochle avoided these misunderstandings because, from the very beginning, certain well-defined rules and methods of procedure were laid down by the authorities.

From the moment the cards are dealt, Auction Pinochle is a predetermined game, its possibilities and play depending on the distribution of the hands and the relative ability of the players. On the other hand, Two-handed Pinochle is a progressive game, in which the draw of the cards may alter the situation.

Neither one is a perfect Cinderella. One game has a foot too small for the glass slipper; the other a foot that is too big. Each should be fitted properly, irrespective of the other.

Fortunately, when an argument arises, it is usually possible to trace the disputed rule to the game where it properly belongs, or to find the answer by logical consideration of the game itself. All common differences of opinion have been carefully studied, and an equitable decision rendered.

In this book, whenever it has been possible to lay down a hard and fast rule, that has been done, but always the variation has been mentioned, though not recommended. Whenever it has been a question of pure choice, the course that seems best suited to the situation has been given preference, but again all variations have been mentioned. So the inveterate Pinochle player need not feel that his favorites have been criticized or neglected if he should find them given a secondary rating.

In analyzing the various games of Pinochle, precedence has been given to Auction, mainly because it is the game that will be of interest to the greater number of players. Moreover, many of the added Pinochle games

bear a closer resemblance to Auction Pinochle than they do to Two-handed Pinochle. This is especially true of Check Pinochle.

This book is divided into four main parts: (1) Auction Pinochle, (2) Two-handed Pinochle, (3) Check Pinochle, (4) Pinochle varieties. The first three parts are covered individually, enabling the reader to study whichever one he chooses. The final part contains some games that may be new even to Pinochle players of long standing.

Let it be understood that all these variations have been long in existence. None of them are inventions designed to start neophytes to learning something that is not Pinochle. All the different games have been discovered through research.

All findings have been adapted to Pinochle as it stands; there has been no attempt to twist the game into something else. Pinochle is distinctive. Its varied forms are good games in themselves, too good to be consigned to the discard, or altered into some freak game that would not be Pinochle.

In addition to dispelling the fog concerning the correct rules, melds, and counts, a method of evaluating the hand in Auction Pinochle is offered. This system has been worked out on a mathematical basis and can easily be checked by the student.

Also given is a brief résumé of the odds against improving the hand with the addition of the Widow. And, as usual, a chapter is devoted to the subtle ruses employed by professional cheats.

## THE PINOCHLE DECK

SPADES—ace, ten, king, queen, jack, nine

HEARTS—ace, ten, king, queen, jack, nine

DIAMONDS—ace, ten, king, queen, jack, nine

CLUBS—ace, ten, king, queen, jack, nine

The Pinochle deck differs radically from the pack used in most other card games. There are forty-eight cards in a complete pack, consisting of two each of the twenty-four cards shown above. There are twelve cards in each of the four suits; every card in the pack has a duplicate. There is no joker.

A Pinochle deck can be made by taking the desired cards from two Poker decks. It is immaterial whether or not the backs match.

In some varieties of Pinochle, the sevens and eights are added, thus forming a pack of sixty-four cards. Two Klob decks can be combined to form one such Pinochle deck. The sixty-four-card pack is used in the variety of Pinochle called Goulash and its derivatives.

One peculiarity of the Pinochle deck that the Bridge or Poker player may find confusing is that the ten spot ranks next in value to the ace. This is true in all forms of the game.

The ordinary Pinochle deck can be divided equally between two, three, or four players—a fact that has contributed materially to the long life and world-wide spread of the various games.

Another distinguishing characteristic of Auction Pinochle is that the cards are almost always dealt three or four at a time instead of singly.

## 2. AUCTION PINOCHLE

### THE STAKES

THREE-HANDED AUCTION can be subdivided into two vastly different games: the play for stakes, which is out and out gambling, and where every hand is complete in itself; and the play for points wherein a certain total (usually 1,000 points) must be scored before the winner is decided. This latter version is generally played for amusement or for very small wagers.

To prevent confusion, all explanations will pertain to the stake game only, with an added chapter outlining the scoring, or point, game.

Most Auction games are played for ten cents a hundred, with substantial bonuses for high bids.

A bid ranging from 250 up to 290 wins the successful player \$.25 from each opponent; a bid ranging from 300 up to 340 wins \$.30. From then on the stakes increase rapidly. A bid of 350 up to 390 is worth \$.50; from 400 up to 440 wins \$1; from 450 up to 490 wins \$2; from 500 up to 540 wins \$4. The pay-off is doubled with each additional fifty points.

If the stakes are a nickel a hundred, these figures are halved. The minimum bid of 250 is usually worth \$.15. Should the stakes be a quarter a hundred, or more, the totals are increased proportionately.

Occasionally extra payments are made for certain melds. If a player has four different aces in his hand

before drawing the Widow he collects the minimum stake from each of the others. Only the successful bidder can collect on bonus melds. This system of prize payments is not recommended as it interferes greatly with the play of the hand.

## THE DEAL

The cards are shuffled by one player, cut by another, then turned face up, one by one, in front of each player in turn. The first one to receive an ace is the dealer.

The dealer gathers the cards, mixes them well, and offers the pack to the player on the right to be cut. The cut is mandatory, and must be completed by the player who is doing the cutting.

The dealer then gives the player on his left three cards; the player on his right three cards; and deals three cards to himself. One card is placed in the center. This process is continued for three rounds. On the two final rounds, no cards are placed in the center. This gives each player fifteen cards, with the three cards in the center forming the Widow, to be auctioned off to the highest bidder.

This particular method of dealing (3, 3, 3, 1, 3, 3, 3, 1, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3) is most often used, but there are several variations. Many players prefer to deal the cards 4, 4, 4, 1, 4, 4, 4, 1, 4, 4, 4, 1, 3, 3, 3. Either of these methods of dealing is permissible, or any variation that enables the dealer to give fifteen cards to each player and three cards to the Widow. What is not allowable is for any player to vary his method by dealing just one or two players, and then putting a card in the Widow. Nor may he deal the Widow more than one card at a time. These restrictions are necessary to lessen the possibility of some unscrupulous player's dealing certain known cards to himself or to the Widow.



## THE WIDOW

After the deal is completed, each player has fifteen cards, and three cards have been set aside to be auctioned to the highest bidder. These three cards are called the Widow.

The introduction of the Widow changed the old-style three-handed Pinochle game into a far more interesting pastime, just as the addition of the draw to Showdown Poker greatly improved that game.

The Widow gives each player a chance to improve his original holdings. The number of "openings" in a player's hand determines how much he can bid. If there is only one card in the deck that can help the hand, the player will naturally bid much lower than if there were two or more cards that could help. The ability to gauge correctly the possibilities of the Widow, and to bid accordingly, is much more important to the money player than the ability to play the hand correctly.

It is sometimes claimed that when useless cards are found in the Widow, the original hand has been lessened in value. This can never be true. Occasionally the Widow adds nothing to the worth of a hand, but it never detracts therefrom.

No one is permitted to look at the Widow until the final bid has been made. Then the cards are turned face up for all to see.

The rule against "peeking" should be strictly enforced. The player who has passed, and who glances at the Widow, may unintentionally give the players who are still bidding a hint as to the value of the three cards.

## THE BID

After the deal the players examine their hands and decide how much they care to bid. Two factors determine the value of the hand: the meld, which can be counted accurately; and the number of high

cards taken in during the play, which can be only approximated.

The player to the left of the dealer bids first. He can bid the full value of his hand if he wishes, or can start the bidding considerably lower. The minimum bid is 250, meaning that the bidder guarantees that the value of his meld, added to the value of the high cards taken in play, will equal or exceed 250 points.

The bid travels to the left—clockwise. Each player in turn bids the number of points he undertakes to make, and can reraise successive bids as often as he chooses. Every bid must be at least ten points higher than the preceding bid.

Once a player passes he cannot bid again. If all players pass, the hands are thrown in and the deal goes to the player on the left of the dealer.

The successful bidder has two advantages over the others: he gains the three cards in the Widow; and he has the privilege of making his best suit trump.

After the Widow has been evaluated, the high bidder declares trump, makes his meld, and discards any three cards, and play begins.

If the player makes his bid, he gains that many points from each of his opponents. If he plays the hand and fails to make his bid, the opponents are each credited with twice the number of points bid. If the hand is thrown in without being played, the opponents gain only the number of points bid.

### *Bidding Alternatives*

The bidding rules offered here are the ones most generally used, as has been proven by a checkup of Pinochle games all over America. However, in some circles other rules have been instituted. Here-with is a list of the usual rules, then the alternative.

(1) If a player once passes, he cannot bid again.

In some cases the bidder is allowed to re-enter the

auction after he has passed. The bidding is not closed until two persons in succession have failed to raise a bid.

(2) The first bidder is required to equal or exceed a minimum bid of 250.

This procedure is advisable as it speeds up the auction. The 250 minimum has been found best for the average player. Sometimes the minimum bid is reduced to 200 points, or even as low as 150. On the other hand, many a high-stake gamester prefers a minimum bid of 300. If there is any dispute the minimum bid can be eliminated entirely.

(3) If all players pass, the hands are thrown in and the deal goes to the player on the left.

This is one rule that, although in general use, should be revised. It has done more to slow up the game than any other factor. Those desiring a more interesting game would do well to require the dealer to bid a certain minimum if the other players should pass. The 250 minimum is best. By so doing all dead hands are eliminated.

The three foregoing rules, being optional, should be agreed upon before play commences.

## THE MELD

If Pinochle consisted merely of taking tricks for the value of the counters, the game would always be on a 250-point basis and would lose much of its interest, being a cut and dried mathematical process with the element of luck almost eliminated. The feature known as the meld constantly changes the total at stake and adds greatly to the lure of the game.

Melding is done before play begins. The successful bidder lays, face up on the table, certain combinations of cards that have considerable point value without a trick being taken. These combinations and their values are as follows:

Common Marriage..king and queen of nontrump suit	20
Royal Marriage.....king and queen of trump.....	40
Trump Sequence....ace, ten, king, queen, jack.....	150
The Dix .....nine of trump.....	10
Pinochle .....jack of diamonds, queen of spades	40
Four Jacks.....one of each suit.....	40
Four Queens.....one of each suit.....	60
Four Kings.....one of each suit.....	80
Four Aces.....one of each suit.....	100
Round Trip.....king and queen of each suit.....	240

The Round Trip, or Round House, is really a combination of six separate melds but is generally regarded as a complete meld in itself. The component parts are: Four Kings (80), Four Queens (60), Royal Marriage (40), Three Common Marriages (60), for a grand total of 240.

### *Rules of the Meld*

Individual cards may figure in more than one meld simultaneously, provided that they comply with the following rules:

(1) A card used in one meld cannot also be used in a duplicate, or identical, meld. (2) A king and queen that are part of a Sequence cannot also be used as a Marriage.

Specimen hand: Spades .....A 10 K Q J  
 Hearts .....A K  
 Diamonds ....A K J J  
 Clubs .....A K K Q

In this hand, with spades trump, the meld is: Sequence in spades—150; Four Aces—100; Four Kings—80; a Common Marriage in clubs—20; Pinochle—40. Total meld—390.

These are the cards laid on the table to be counted:

ace, ten, king, queen, jack of spades; ace, king, queen of clubs; ace, king of hearts; ace, king, jack of diamonds.

The second king of clubs cannot be placed with the queen to form another Marriage; nor can the second jack of diamonds be used for another Pinochle. To do this would require employing the king of clubs and the queen of spades in two identical melds.

However, the one queen of spades can be used both for the Sequence in spades and for Pinochle. These are two different melds.

Since the king and queen of spades are part of the Sequence, they cannot also be counted as a Royal Marriage.

A few circles claim that when a Round Trip is melded another Marriage is required to reach the total of 240. This is true in Two-handed Pinochle but not in Auction Pinochle.

There are several "outlaw melds" that cause much unnecessary dissension. Most of these illegitimate counts have crept in from Two-handed Pinochle. In Auction all cards are melded simultaneously; hence the great difference from Two-handed Pinochle, where the melding is progressive, cards being added to form new melds as the play proceeds.

Specimen hand: Spades	.....	A	K	Q	J
Hearts	.....	A	10	K	Q
Diamonds	....	K	Q	9	
Clubs	.....	K	Q	9	

With hearts trump, the correct count on this hand is: Heart Sequence—150; Four Kings—80; Four Queens—60; Three Common Marriages—60. Total—350.

If spades were made trump the Round Trip would be the only meld. Total—240.

Many players attempt to meld the Round Trip (240) and the heart Sequence (150) separately, for a grand

total of 390. This would necessitate using the Royal Marriage twice—something that is not permissible. The Round Trip plus a Sequence always counts for 350.

The practice of allowing a ten-point bonus for the Round Trip, counting it as 250, is gradually being abolished. It is not recommended.

Here is another Pinochle hand that in many games would touch off a hot argument because it contains not one, but three disputable melds.

Specimen hand: Spades . . . . . A K Q Q J 10  
                   Hearts . . . . . Q Q  
                   Diamonds . . . . K Q Q J J  
                   Clubs . . . . . Q Q

The main bone of contention here is Double Pinochle: two jacks of diamonds and two queens of spades. In the two-handed game that combination counts for 300, as it is difficult to get. In Auction there is no Double Pinochle. The correct count is 40 points each; 80 for the two.

Another combination not recognized in Auction is Grand Pinochle: king and queen of spades, plus the jack of diamonds. In the two-handed game Grand Pinochle always counts for 80, but in Auction it counts for 80 only if spades are trump. Otherwise the count is: Common Marriage—20; Pinochle—40. Total—60.

The third meld that may prove troublesome is the eight queens. There is a school that advocates a series of freakish counts: 1,000 for eight aces; 800 for eight kings; 600 for eight queens; 400 for eight jacks. These counts are not legitimate in any form of Pinochle. When played they throw the entire game out of balance, putting too high a premium upon luck.

The correct method of counting the eight queens is simply to double the value of four different queens.

Twice 60 is 120. Similarly, eight aces would count for 200; eight kings for 160; eight jacks for 80.

If spades are trump the correct counts are as follows: Sequence—150; Eight Queens—120; Two Pinochles—80; Common Marriage in diamonds—20. Total—370.

## TRUMP

The successful bidder has the privilege of naming trump. When the hand is played the lowest card of the trump suit is higher in value than any card of another suit.

Usually the bidder makes trump the suit in which he is longest and strongest, but certain circumstances may alter this rule.

The Sequence—ace, ten, king, queen, jack—can be melded only in the trump suit. Otherwise it is only a Common Marriage, counted for 20.

There are certain rules concerning the play of the trump suit that do not apply to the off suits. (1) When trump is led, each succeeding player must lay down a higher trump if he can. (2) If a player is void in a non-trump suit and that suit is led, he must trump it if he can. If he has no trump he can discard anything he wishes.

If a player leads the one remaining card of a suit, he forces both his opponents to trump it. In such a case, the third player does not have to overtrump the second. The rule of topping a trump applies only when trump is led.

Penalties are provided to punish any player who, intentionally or otherwise, violates the rules regarding the play of the trump suit.

There is one important difference between trump in Pinochle and trump in other games. In Pinochle, the bidder must declare a trump suit—there is no provision for no-trump hands.

## TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY

After the auction the highest bidder turns, face up, the three cards in the Widow. When the opponents have seen the cards, the bidder adds them to his hand. The meld is laid out, the trump suit is named, and the three extra cards are buried. Then comes the vital question: Should the hand be played or thrown in?

Sometimes the value of the meld equals or exceeds the bid. In that case there is no problem—the bidder automatically wins. But most of the time the meld is less than the bid. The difference must be made up by playing the hand and capturing certain valuable cards.

If it is obviously impossible for the bidder to take in enough counters to make up the difference, then the hand is thrown in and each of the opponents is credited with the amount bid. On the other hand, if the bidder holds a powerhouse and is sure to win enough in the play to make his bid, then the cards are shown and the opponents concede the hand.

Most Pinochle hands fall into the doubtful class—some possible, some probable. In this case the bidder must decide for himself whether or not to play the hand. To prevent the bidder from wasting time by playing impossible hands a penalty is exacted if the hand is played and not made. When this happens each of the opponents is credited with twice the amount bid.

Even a tyro knows when a hand is much too weak or much too strong, but the ability to judge close hands correctly can come only from practice.

## THE BURIAL

Should the bidder decide to play the hand, he must first discard, or bury, the three extra cards that he picked up in the Widow. These cards belong to the bidder, constituting, in effect, an additional



trick. Any counters among them are credited to the bidder in the final scoring.

There is one inflexible rule pertaining to the burial. It is never permissible to bury any card that has been used in the meld. A player who violates this rule forfeits the hand, and must pay the same as though he had been set. The careless player who buries more or less than three cards also loses the hand.

The bidder can never meld more than fifteen cards. Should he be in a position to do so, he must take from the meld all excess cards, usually those that will least reduce the melding value, and bury them.

To prevent costly mistakes, the bidder should discard before picking up the meld.

It is sometimes advisable to bury a trump. There are those who claim that when a trump is buried, the bidder must notify the other players. This is *not* necessary. Nor is it necessary to declare the burial of an ace. Both of these illegal demands put the bidder at an unwarranted disadvantage.

Generally the bidder will find it advantageous to bury ten spots of an off suit, if he has any. They not only have a high count value, but seldom take a trick.

## THE PLAY

In Pinochle the bidder is also the leader, playing the first card. Thereafter, the winner of each trick leads for the next trick.

The highest card of the suit led takes the trick unless it is trumped.

The fact that all the cards are duplicated presents no complication. If two identical cards are played on the same trick, the one played first is the highest. Thus, if the jack of hearts is led, the second player lays down an ace, and the third player another ace, the trick goes to the second player.

All players must follow suit if possible. Failing that, they must trump. If they can neither follow suit nor trump they can discard as they please.

Whenever a trump is led, each succeeding player must top it. In some games the players are required to top all cards played regardless of suit. This is not advisable. It not only places a terrific burden upon the third player, but cancels much of the value of the trump suit.

The idea of the play is to capture certain valuable cards that, when totaled, determine the winner. The bidder is in the position of a lone wolf, trying to take in sufficient counters to make his bid. Conversely, the opponents form a temporary partnership, giving counters to each other whenever possible to prevent the bidder from getting them.

If the bidder succeeds, he has "made" his hand. Otherwise the hand has been "set"; the bidder "goes up."

## THE COUNT

After the hand has been played the cards are looked over and the counters totaled. There are three different methods of counting, each of which has numerous adherents.

(1) The *old-style* count: ace, 11; ten, 10; king, 4; queen, 3; jack, 2.

(2) The *simplified* count: ace, 10; ten, 10; king, 10.

(3) The *compromise* count: ace, 10; ten, 10; king, 5; queen, 5.

In all these variations there is a 10-point bonus for the last trick. So the total count is always 250.

The *old-style* count originated in Two-handed Pinochle and is the favorite with devotees of that form of the game. Because of it, Pinochle scores are figured in tens instead of units.

The *simplified* count is preferred by beginners because it requires less concentration during the play.

Those using it reduce a 350 score to 35, a 420 bid to 42, etc.

The *compromise* count is used by most seasoned Auction players. It is not as intricate as the old-style count or as simple as the simplified count. It resembles both the others so closely that one familiar with either has little or no difficulty if the compromise count is used. Scoring is facilitated because all figures are multiples of five.

These diverse systems of counting cause fluctuations in the point totals scored in any hand. So the style of play varies according to the type of scoring used.

## THE KITTY

An innovation in Auction Pinochle that greatly enhances the danger to the wild bidder is the Kitty. On every hand bid and lost, the bidder pays off, not only the two opposing players, but a third invisible opponent—the Kitty.

The winner of the Kitty is the player who first bids, and makes, a hand of a certain predetermined value. Usually the minimum hand required is 400. Sometimes a 350 hand will take half the Kitty; 400 the whole Kitty.

There are many ways of playing the Kitty, so it is advisable to agree beforehand on the system to be used.

The unsuccessful bidder doesn't always pay the Kitty the same amount he pays his opponents. If a 350 bid takes half the Kitty, and a 400 bid the entire Kitty, the following system is recommended:

Anyone bidding 340 or less and throwing the hand in without playing would pay the Kitty the amount bid.

Anyone bidding 340 or less who plays the hand and fails to make it would pay the Kitty twice the amount bid.

Anyone bidding between 350 and 390 and throwing the hand in without playing it would pay half the size of the Kitty.

Anyone bidding between 350 and 390 who plays the hand and fails to make it would pay the size of the Kitty.

Anyone bidding 400 or over and throwing the hand in without playing would pay the size of the Kitty.

Anyone bidding 400 or over who plays the hand and fails to make it would pay twice the size of the Kitty.

This system is equitable and easily remembered.

## SPADES DOUBLE

Seldom is Auction Pinochle played without the added feature of spades double. The practice is so prevalent that the colloquialism "That goes in spades" is known the world over. Through long usage it has become an integral part of the game and should be employed, for it provides much spice and excitement.

A word of warning: When the stakes are high a bad set in spades will ruin a whole evening of well-played hands.

A player who bids and makes a hand with spades trump collects from his opponents twice the amount bid.

Theoretically, a player who makes spades trump and throws in the hand without playing it should pay the opponents twice the amount bid. In practice this never happens. If the hand is hopeless the bidder merely makes another suit trump and pays off on that basis.

This is a tremendous advantage to the player who bids with a promising spade hand. But it is counterbalanced by another rule. Should a player make spades trump, play the hand, and lose, he pays the opponents four times the amount bid. So it is wise to toss in a hand that looks doubtful, or if possible make another suit trump.

The double in spades changes the bidding considerably. The player with a heavy meld not dependent on a Sequence tries to buy the hand cheaply, knowing that he gains more by making a 300 hand in spades than a 400 hand in another suit. Conversely, the player void in

spades often overbids his hand, fearing that one of the opponents has a spade Sequence.

## HEARTS TRIPLE

Some Pinochle genius with a flair for the dramatic introduced the added hazard of hearts triple. The player who bids and makes a hand with hearts trump collects three times the amount bid from each of the opponents. On the other hand, if a player should play a hand with hearts trump and lose, he pays each of the opponents six times the amount bid.

Hearts triple is never played unless spades are double, for that would result in a game that was off balance. This double feature—spades double, hearts triple—is not recommended for amateurs or those with weak hearts.

At first glance it would seem that a minimum hand in hearts would pay better than a maximum hand in clubs or diamonds, but it doesn't always work out that way. The bonus system changes values radically whenever 350 or more is bid.

Specimen hand: Spades . . . . . A A K Q J 9  
                   Hearts . . . . . K Q  
                   Diamonds . . . . A A 10 K Q J  
                   Clubs . . . . . K

With spades trump this is a safe 300 hand: meld, 210; play, 90. At ten cents a hundred the bidder would collect \$.60 from each of the opponents.

With hearts trump this is a safe 250 hand: meld, 200; play, 50. Bidder collects \$.75 from each opponent.

With diamonds trump this would be a 450 hand: meld, 310; play, 140. At ten cents a hundred straight the bidder would collect only \$.45 from each opponent, but because of the bonus system the actual amount would be \$2 each.

## DEALER STAYS OUT

One of the greatest advantages of Auction Pinochle is that four players can indulge without one of the participants being out of action for a tie. This form of the game is referred to as "dealer stays out" to distinguish it from the four-handed partnership game.

The dealer, following the prescribed rules for dealing, gives the other three players fifteen cards each. To himself he deals three cards to make up the Widow. Because of this the dealer is sometimes called the Husband of the Widow.

After the auction, the dealer turns face up the three cards in the Widow. If the hand is played out the dealer may watch any player he wishes but is forbidden to make any comment. Although the dealer for that particular hand is inactive as far as the play is concerned, he has a financial stake in the outcome. Should the bidder make his hand, the dealer pays off just as do the two active opponents. And should the bidder lose the hand, the dealer collects.

When the hand is finished, the player to the left becomes the dealer. Thus after four hands have been played each player in turn has been the dealer.

In most games, if the first two players pass, the third player must make a mandatory bid of 290 or 320. If this rule is not enforced and all three players pass, the same player deals.

Should a three-handed game with the Kitty be in progress and a fourth player wishes to join, the new-comer must add to the Kitty one third of the amount already there.

## THE SCORE

As explained before, there are two distinct forms of Auction Pinochle—the stake game, wherein each deal is complete in itself, and the scoring

game, where a predetermined number of points must be amassed before the winner is decided.

The usual total required is 1,000 points, although 1,200, 1,250, and 1,500 games are not uncommon. The total needed should be agreed on by all players before play commences.

One of the participants is designated as the scorer. It is his duty to see that all credits and debits are correctly allocated. After each hand the totals should be checked by the other players. When this is done, many disputes are avoided.

The main difference between the two forms of Auction Pinochle is that in the scoring game every player melds at the same time the bidder does. Each is conditionally credited with the amount he melds.

If the bidder is successful, he gains the total amount made; if unsuccessful, he loses only the amount of his bid.

Example: The bid is 300 but the total of the meld and the counters taken in play is 360. The bidder is credited with 360 points. If he is set, he loses only 300 points.

Each nonbidder is also credited with the amount he melded plus the value of the counters taken in during play. There is one proviso—he must take in at least one trick, otherwise the meld is voided. This trick need not contain a counter.

Sometimes a player will lose more points than he has to his credit. In this case he goes into the minus column—a fact indicated by a ring around his score.

### *The Scoring Bid*

The bidder in the scoring game is usually much more conservative than the bidder in the stake game. The reason for this is obvious—by remaining silent he gains some points without danger of going in the hole.

This is particularly true when a player holds a large

meld that is not dependent on a certain suit's being trump. One holding such a hand (Round Trip or Four Aces) will often pass. Not only will he score approximately as much as if he were to take the hand, but there is always a chance that he might "bete" the one who bids.

There are, however, several factors favorable to the bidder that prevent the game from becoming static.

With the addition of the Widow, the bidder has eighteen cards from which to meld; his opponents have only fifteen.

The bidder always has a better count on the hand than his opponents because he is the only one who knows what cards have been buried. The better the player, the more important that knowledge is.

Since the bidder is also the leader, he can never be caught with a bare ace.

But the greatest advantage to the bidder lies in the fact that he names the trump suit. The chance of anyone but the bidder melding a Sequence is practically negligible, and the value in the play of the hand is self-evident. This alone makes it impossible for a super-cautious player to win the game by sitting back and letting the others do all the bidding.

### *The Scoring Play*

There is a great deal of difference between the play of a hand in the stake game and the play in a scoring game. In the stake game the issue is clear-cut—the bidder must be defeated at all costs. The opponents unite for this purpose. But in the scoring game there are complications. The temporary partners must not only combine against the bidder, but they must protect themselves from each other.

Nonbidders like to take in all the counters possible in order to increase their own score. But to prevent the bidder from making his contract, it is often necessary to



sacrifice high-value cards. It is customary for the non-bidders to throw counters to each other whenever possible—an act referred to as “smearing” a trick.

Once the bidder's cause becomes hopeless, all mutual assistance ceases, for the next best thing to taking a counter oneself is to throw it to the bidder, where it counts for no one.

A nonbidder avoids taking a trick already won by his partner when he knows the bidder has other losing cards in the same suit. However, he must be certain to take in at least one trick or his meld is not counted. There are times when the two desires clash and the player has a delicate problem to solve.

The situation becomes even more complex when one player is close to the game limit. At such a time the correct procedure is for the two low-score men to unite against the high-score man and prevent his going out, no matter who is the bidder.

### *The Finish*

Quite often in a scoring game there will be a Garrison finish—all three players score more than 1,000 on the same hand. In such a case the bidder is the winner even though he may have a smaller total than either of his opponents.

Example: A has 700, B 900, C 940. A gets the bid for 280. The credits for that hand are: A 320, B 200, C 230, making the final scores: A 1,020, B 1,100, C 1,170.

Despite the fact that the bid of 200 would not have put A out, he is the winner.

But if, in the same situation, the credits for the last hand were: A 290, B 200, C 230, the final scores would be: A 990, B 1,100, C 1,170. In this case C wins, for he went out higher than the other nonbidder.

Some players claim that one must bid in order to go out, but this practice is not standard and is not recommended. It encourages improper bids for the sole pur-

pose of crowding a high scorer from the victory, and demoralizes the game in its closing stages.

In case of a tie between two nonbidders who go out on the same hand while the bidder does not, the game is continued for an additional 250 points.

Because Pinochle scores frequently drop into the minus column, an arbitrary safety valve is needed. Whenever a player's score becomes 1,000 minus (or 1,200 minus if 1,200 is the game limit), the game terminates and at the end of the hand the player with the highest score wins.

### *The Settlement*

The scoring version of Auction Pinochle is one of the few card games that can be enjoyed by the players when no stakes are involved. It is played for amusement only more often than all other games combined.

When a wager is made it is usually a nominal sum—a dime or a quarter per game. Seldom is it more than a dollar. The winner collects the sum agreed upon from each of the losers.

Occasionally settlement is made on a point basis. When this is the case, the victor is given a bonus payment of 500 points for winning the game. If this were not done it would be possible for the player who won the game to lose money to another player who had accumulated a higher total on the final hand.

One method of point settlement is for each individual player to subtract his own score from the winner's total and pay the difference.

Example: A has 960, B 1,620, C 720.

B is the winner. He collects 660 points from A and 900 points from C. At a tenth of a cent a point, A would lose \$.66; C would lose \$.90.

The second method of point settlement is a little more complex. The winner collects from the losers as

usual, but the second highest scorer collects from the low man the difference between their scores. Thus, if the final figures were the same as those given above, B would win the same amount, but A would collect 240 points, or \$.24 from C. Therefore, A would lose \$.42; B would win \$1.56; C would lose \$1.14.

## MISDEAL

Pinochle players are chary of calling a misdeal and avoid doing so if possible. However, there are times when it cannot be helped.

It is a misdeal if the pack is found to be incorrect. The same dealer rectifies the pack already in use, or procures a new pack. The cards are then shuffled, offered to be cut, and redealt.

If the pack has not been properly shuffled and cut, and a player calls attention to this oversight before the first round is completed, the cards must be gathered, shuffled, cut, and redealt.

It is a misdeal if any of the cards in the Widow are exposed, or if the Widow is given less than three cards.

It is a misdeal if two or more cards in any one hand are exposed because of carelessness on the part of the dealer. But if the player fumbles while picking up his hand, and exposes some of his cards, the deal stands.

If, during the deal, one or more cards are found to be faced, the cards are righted, shuffled, and the deal continues.

Should a player deal out of turn, and attention is called to this fact before the first round is completed, the cards are gathered and given to the player whose turn it was to deal.

It is a misdeal if, because of carelessness on the part of the dealer, any player can name one or more cards in the Widow.

If any card is found to be imperfect (marked, torn, etc.) that deal is void, and another pack must be pro-

cured. Scores made with that pack in previous deals are not affected.

### INCORRECT HANDS

It is *not* a misdeal if any of the players is given an incorrect number of cards. Each player is responsible for his own hand. Often the error can be righted without harm to anyone.

A player with less than fifteen cards draws from a hand with more, irrespective of whether or not the hand has been inspected. The player with the extra cards shuffles his hand and spreads the cards face down on the table. The player who is short of cards takes therefrom the number necessary to give him fifteen.

If the Widow contains four or more cards, the player who lacks cards is given the excess.

If the incorrect deal is not discovered until after the bidding has been completed and the Widow properly exposed, these rules apply:

If the bidder's hand contains the correct number of cards, he automatically makes his contract and collects from each of the others the amount bid.

If the bidder's hand is incorrect and he concedes the hand, he pays each of the opponents the amount bid.

If the bidder's hand is incorrect and he leads for the first trick without noticing the error, he pays each of his opponents double the amount bid.

Should one of the nonbidders be short a card or cards subsequently discovered on the floor or elsewhere, the bidder is considered to have made his contract.

Should this happen to the bidder, he pays his opponents the amount bid if he concedes the hand, double the amount bid if he leads for the first trick.

### IMPROPER BIDDING

There is much good-natured kidding during the auction in most Pinochle games—far

more than would be tolerated at Bridge. Good players discourage such facetiousness, but there is no penalty attached thereto.

Here are a few samples of bids that are void:

A bid of less than the minimum agreed upon before play commenced.

A bid of more than 650. While it is possible to make more than 650, it is not possible to bid more.

A bid not expressed in multiples of ten—325, 455, etc.

A bid by an inactive player when four or more are in the game.

A bid by a player who has previously passed. This does not apply to games wherein a player who passes may re-enter the auction.

A bid out of turn is void without penalty, but the other two players (or either of them, if the other has passed) may treat it as a correct bid by bidding or passing over it.

An insufficient bid is one made in turn but not high enough to overcall the last preceding bid.

If the one who makes an insufficient bid has previously passed, the bid is void without penalty.

If the offender has not previously passed, he must substitute any sufficient bid, but the other two players (or either of them, if the other has passed) may treat it as a correct bid by bidding or passing over it.

## EXPOSED CARDS

The bane of all good Pinochle players is the curious party who cannot resist looking at the Widow before the auction has been completed. The rules forbid this "peeking," but since no penalty is provided for a violation, it is a law without teeth.

However, if the impatient one should expose one of the cards in the Widow while handling it, he gets his just deserts. The hand is voided, and the offender must pay to each other player, including the Kitty and every

inactive player, the value of the highest bid made prior to his offense.

If one of the players should inadvertently see a card in the Widow before the auction closes, he is barred from further bidding.

Sometimes before the auction is completed a player drops, names, or otherwise reveals his possession of a certain card. If later that player becomes the bidder, there is no penalty. But should the offender become a nonbidder, he is penalized. On the first lead or play at which he could legally play that card, the bidder may either require or forbid him to play it.

The bidder may turn and look at the cards he buries at any time before he leads or plays to the second trick. If he does so thereafter, he loses the hand and pays double the amount bid.

Any player may turn and look at a trick until his side has played to the next trick, but not thereafter. If a nonbidder violates this rule, the bidder's contract is made. If the bidder is the violator, he pays each of his opponents double the amount bid.

## THE REVOKE

The most serious error in Pinochle is the revoke, or renege. Play ceases immediately when attention is called to a revoke. The penalty is loss of the hand.

If the bidder revokes, he pays double, just as if the hand had been set. If one of the opponents revokes, the bidder is considered to have made his contract and collects accordingly.

If both sides revoke, the penalty applies to the offense to which attention is first called; if attention to both revokes is drawn simultaneously, the penalty applies to the offense that was committed first.

There are three common methods of revoking:

(1) A player has a card of the suit led but fails to play it.

(2) A player is void of the suit led, but has a trump card and fails to play it.

(3) A trump is led and succeeding players can top it but fail to do so. An exception is made when the third player can beat the trump led, but not the second card played. Example: king of trump is led; second player puts on the ace; third player can throw on any trump he wishes.

There is a fourth revoke that is seldom encountered: when a nonbidder fails to play a card previously exposed when directed by bidder to play it, or plays such card when directed by bidder not to play it.

If the bidder leads out of turn, there is no penalty, but if a nonbidder leads out of turn, it is a revoke.

## BETTER BIDDING

The player who knows when to bid and when not to bid is more often a winner than the one who plays well but bids weakly.

The bidding is a preliminary skirmish in which each player tries to choose the ground on which the real battle of the hand will be fought. The primary purpose is to gain the privilege of playing the hand at a figure that gives you more than an even chance. The secondary purpose is to make another player take the bid at a figure that gives him less than an even chance.

The question of how much to bid depends on two factors: the number of openings in the hand, and the probabilities of finding one or more of the key cards in the Widow. The successful bidder is he who can best calculate his chances.

The player who consistently bids too little will never receive the full worth of the cards he holds; the one who always bids too much will never receive the full value of

the money he wagers. The problem, then, is to strike a happy medium.

The best way to curb the optimist and give courage to the pessimist is to remove as much of the element of chance as possible. To do that we offer on the following pages a mathematical table showing the actual value of the Widow; a system showing how best to use the knowledge thus gained; and a series of suggestions that should prove invaluable to the neophyte and of great assistance to the expert.

Warning: the hints contained herein apply to the stake game. Quite often in the scoring game other methods are advisable. These differences are noted in a later chapter devoted to bidding for score.

### *Types of Bidding*

There are four types of bids, which can be classed thus:

(1) **THE SAFE BID.** When the value of the meld is added to the value of the counters certain to be taken in during the play, the result is a safe bid.

(2) **THE NORMAL BID.** When the hand has three openings, calculate the minimum value of the meld if one of the key cards is found in the Widow. Add the value of counters sure to be won. This gives the normal bid.

(3) **THE RISK BID.** When the hand has two openings, calculate the minimum value of the meld if one of the key cards is found in the Widow. Add the value of the counters that will probably be won during the play. The result is the risk bid.

(4) **THE WILD BID.** When the hand has only one opening, calculate the value of the meld if the missing card is found in the Widow. Add the maximum value of the counters that may be taken in during the play. This is the wild bid.



The close player who habitually bids safe will seldom get set, but neither will he collect what his hands are worth.

He who constantly bids normally stands a much better chance of winning than the conservative player, but is apt to be outsmarted by a clever opponent. Once the others can figure out when a player is going to bid, and how much, they will endeavor to upset the apple cart by boosting the bid unnecessarily, or by dropping it at an exceedingly low level.

The player who judiciously uses the risk bid will almost always win. Jumping back and forth between normal bidding and risk bidding confuses the opponents and adds spice to the game.

About the wild bidder, the less said the better.

### *Defensive Bidding*

The really good player often finds it necessary to bid when he has nothing, in order to prevent an opponent from getting a lay-down hand. This phase of the game, defensive bidding, is sadly neglected, but pays big dividends when properly used.

In any game the personality of the opposing player is important; never more so than when you are bidding defensively. If you have studied the peculiarities of the opposing bidder, and know from experience that he will not drop out below a certain level, bid him up as high as possible, then drop it. Many times a hand thus boosted will be set when played.

The simplest form of defensive bidding is when you hold doubletons. Two aces of spades in your hand mean that no one but you can meld 100 aces or 150 in spades. Similarly, two jacks of diamonds prevent an opponent from melding 150 in diamonds or 40 jacks or Pinochle.

However, it isn't always necessary to hold doubletons in order to enter a bluff bid. The better-than-average

player will often put in a bid that he knows is unsound from a theoretical point of view when he has cause to believe that the opponent will go still higher.

Remember that this weapon can be turned against you; hence the desirability of varying your style of play. In general, it pays to do the unexpected. Yet, paradoxically, there are players who do this so much they defeat their purpose. The "smart" bidder who, striving for deception, sacrifices soundness will be utterly ruined. The ideal bidder bluffs often enough to keep the others guessing, but not so often that he gains the reputation of always being out on a limb.

### *Bidding in Spades*

When spades are double the relative value of the four types of bids is greatly altered.

When you are holding a sure spade hand remember that a safe bid is just as certain and twice as valuable as when another suit is trump. Don't go over it unless forced.

When you have three openings, any one of which will make spades trump, try not to go above a normal bid. You have the comforting knowledge that it is unlikely that the opponent is looking for a spade Sequence.

When you have three openings, not one of which will make spades trump, then go to a risk bid. By so doing you may prevent an opponent from making a spade hand.

There are numerous tricky hands that require careful consideration. Suppose you hold a strong hand in diamonds and a good possibility of catching a spade hand. Keep the bidding as low as possible so the hand can be played in spades if you connect. True, this procedure sometimes costs money, but it pays off oftener than not.

The only time a good player makes a wild bid is when spades are double. If he knows the opponent is surely bidding in spades and is likely to make the hand, he may

as well reach for the moon. He stands to lose little and gain much.

In general, the player who intends to make spades trump should bid as low as possible; if some other suit is to be trump, he should bid as high as possible.

It is obvious that defensive bidding is vastly more important when spades are double, often meaning the difference between winning and losing.

All these observations apply when hearts are triple, only more so.

### *Bidding for Score*

In the scoring game it pays to be a conservative bidder. Indeed, very often when the hand contains a large meld regardless of trump and little playing value, it is advantageous not to bid at all.

The hand usually contains some meld that will be counted even though an opponent gets the bid. This meld will be lost on the hands that are bid in and not made, a constant penalty that greatly reduces the effectiveness of any bid.

To offset this partially, the bidder scores in his favor not only the amount he bids, but the total amount he makes. And he has the privilege of naming trump and discarding. But a little analysis will show this is not enough.

The normal bid will be made two times out of three. So, if three similar hands were played, the normal bidder would lose twice as much on the hands lost as he would gain on the hand he made. And if he hadn't bid at all he would have scored his meld and defensive trick count all three times.

On the other hand, the safe bidder would make the hand nine times out of ten, giving him a net profit on eight games. This more than tips the scale in his favor.

A good rule to follow: do not go above the safe bid unless the meld is dependent on a Sequence, or the

hand is so unbalanced that it is powerful offensively but weak defensively. A strong offensive hand has an unseen advantage that should not be ignored. If strong enough, it may prevent one or both of the opponents from taking a trick, thus nullifying their meld.

Summing up: the safe bid is best for the scoring game; the normal bid is best for the stake game.

## POSSIBILITIES OF THE WIDOW

The bidder who knows exactly what his chances are of finding a key card in the Widow has a tremendous advantage over the other players. Here is that knowledge in condensed form.

In three-handed Pinochle you have fifteen cards in your hand. The other thirty-three cards can arrange themselves into 5,456 Widows.

If you need one certain card, not holding its duplicate in your hand, there will be 4,495 Widows that do not contain it. The chance of connecting is 18 out of 100, about 1 out of 6.

If you need one of two certain cards, there will be 3,654 Widows that do not contain either. The chance of getting one of the cards is 35 out of 100, about 1 out of 3. Only 120 Widows will contain both cards. Chances are 2 out of 100; about 1 out of 45.

If you need one of three certain cards, there will be 2,925 Widows that contain none. The chance of getting one is 46 out of 100; about 1 out of 2. There are 354 Widows that contain two desired cards. Chances: 6 out of 100, about 1 out of 15. Only 8 Widows contain all three, a slim chance of 1 out of 682.

If you need one of four certain cards, there will be 2,300 useless Widows. The chance of getting one is 58 out of 100, about 4 out of 7. Two of the cards will be found in 656 Widows, a chance of 12 out of 100, about 1

out of 8. Only 32 Widows will contain three of the desired cards, a chance of 1 out of 170.

If you hold five cards of a suit the chance of drawing at least one more of that suit is slightly better than 1 out of 2; the chance of drawing at least two more is 1 out of 10.

If you hold two five-card suits the chance of drawing to one of the suits is 82 out of 100, about 9 out of 11; the chance of drawing two cards to one of the suits is about 1 out of 5.

## UNSEEN VALUE

Every Pinochle hand has an actual value that can be added up by a count of the meld already held, plus the tricks certain to be won. It also has a potential value, depending upon possible melds that may be completed from the Widow. Besides, there is an unseen value present in every hand, a value that varies greatly according to the length of the trump suit, the solidness of the high cards, and the ability to play correctly.

The beginner can easily figure the actual value, since it is a simple matter of arithmetic. The experienced player can calculate the potential value by adjusting the possible improvements according to the laws of probability. But only the expert can unerringly appraise the unseen value.

Good Pinochle players frequently gauge the value of the hand by some individual system called "card sense." Only time can give a player "card sense," but a little study can provide anyone with an acceptable substitute—"probability sense."

Even the best estimates are apt to go wrong when based upon experience alone. A good player may overbid a hand if it closely resembles a hand of different probabilities with which he once had success. Contrari-

wise, he may toss in a good hand because its strength lies in some element he had not considered.

It is our purpose here to offer a system that will be applicable to any hand. By adapting mathematics to Pinochle a constant value is given to all the unseen factors. With this system the tyro will be able to calculate with the facility of an experienced player. And the better-than-average player will soon become an expert.

### *Suit Strength*

One of the calculations generally overlooked concerns suit strength, a factor that can be readily determined while the player is arranging the cards in his hand. A balanced Pinochle hand would consist of three suits of four cards each, and one suit of three cards. Strength comes with irregularity in one or more suits. Usually the longest suit is the strongest suit.

These extra cards either take counters or pave the way for taking them. Therefore they are entitled to some consideration when the total value of the hand is being calculated. It is easy to prove by mathematical analysis or by actual experimentation that the fifth card of any suit is worth 20 points, and all additional cards are also worth 20 points—always provided that suit is headed by an ace-ten or by ace-king-queen.

Most Pinochle hands have one strong suit. Whether that suit is trump or not, the count remains the same.

Two-suited hands are considered the strongest as far as playing value is concerned. The reserve suit is always counted on the same basis as the trump suit.

In the rare instances where the hand contains three suits of five cards each, only the two strongest suits are counted. It is obvious that after the Widow has been added one of the three suits will be weakened by burial.

To understand better the method of counting suit strength, consider the sample hand:

Spades . . . . .	A A 10 K Q
Hearts . . . . .	A 10 Q J 9
Diamonds . . . . .	A Q Q 9
Clubs . . . . .	A J

Two extra spades—40 points; One extra heart—20 points.  
Total suit strength—60 points.

### *Playing Value*

The commonest error in ascertaining the value of a Pinochle hand comes when the player appraises the counters likely to be taken in during the play. The optimist figures on getting a break in trump and thus picking up additional counters, while the pessimist credits his opponent with a long trump suit and counts only his aces and high trumps. The average lies between the two extremes.

Here is a rapid method of estimating playing value that is simplicity itself. It holds good no matter what variation of count is used.

An ace is counted as a sure trick. The few times an ace is trumped or the bidder is caught with a bare ace are more than counterbalanced by the chance of picking up a counter. So an ace counts as 10. Double aces are counted as 25; double ace-ten as 40; double ace and double ten as 50.

A lone ten spot is not counted. True, it can often be buried and thus count as 10, but just as often it must be held in the hand and lost. However, a ten spot under an ace is counted as 10; two ten spots and one ace would have a total value of 30.

Lone face cards are not counted, but a king under ace-ten is valued at 5; two kings are counted as 10; king-queen as 10. Do not count any of these combinations under an ace alone, only under ace-ten.

The sample hand previously shown would have a

playing count as follows: spades—50; hearts—20; diamonds—10; clubs—10. Total playing count—90.

To many this will seem an irreducible minimum, but it is really a fair average. Quite often 90 points cannot be made.

### *Meld Value*

The most difficult problem confronting the would-be expert is how to evaluate the potential meld so as to bid exactly what the hand is worth.

The player who knows just what his chances are of finding a key card in the Widow is in a much better position than he who gropes in the dark. To gain this advantage, it is necessary to memorize the table of probabilities and learn how to apply that knowledge.

Here is how it is done: Suppose you have three openings in your hand with an average value of 150 points. The chance of finding one of the key cards in the Widow is 1 out of 2. So the potential meld value is one half of 150, or 75 points.

Suppose there are two openings with an average value of 150 points. Your chance of getting one of the missing cards is 1 out of 3. So the potential meld value is 50 points.

If you have one opening in your hand, possession of which will give you a Sequence, you have a potential meld value of one sixth of 150, or 25 points.

The average value of the missing key cards is found by totaling the highest possible melds and dividing by the number of cards missing. Should you need an ace for 100 aces and a king of another suit for a Sequence of 150, the average value would be 125; potential meld value a little over 40 points.

If one card should fill two different melds, count only the highest. This mathematical inequality is taken care



of in the arbitrary value of 20 points assigned to the Widow.

If two cards are missing for two different Sequences, both should be counted as 150, even though only one can be used.

### *Widow Value*

The addition of three extra cards to his hand give the successful bidder an advantage every time. There are numerous ways in which the total count can be increased. Seldom does the Widow fail to help, by bringing either more trumps, high cards that can be buried, or minor melds.

Most Pinochle players think of the Widow in terms of spectacular gains, overlooking the lesser chances. But quite often it is these small improvements that bring insurance to a normal bid and make it possible to fulfill a risk bid.

Here again it is possible to introduce a simple system of evaluating the Widow. Instead of trying to estimate innumerable possibilities, we can cover the whole process in one step. The acquisition of the Widow brings an advantage of 20 points, entirely in addition to any desired cards that may fill major melds.

This added rating covers the possibility of unlooked-for minor melds—an extra Marriage, 40 jacks, etc.; of high-card pickups suitable for discarding; and of the times when one card will fill two or more melds.

These additional 20 points are a bidding margin that can be dropped off for a preliminary bid and added on the next round. And should the player have a run of hard luck, failing to make a succession of sound contracts, he can eliminate the Widow value for a time.

All in all, the 20 extra points for the Widow is a flexible count used by the cautious bidder to give him cour-

age, and dropped by the overconfident bidder when things go wrong.

### *Qualifying the Widow Value*

Since the Widow value is an arbitrary count, there are times when it is worth more and times when it is worth less.

When spades or diamonds are trump, and Pinochle is not already held in the hand, the Widow is obviously worth more because of the possibility of picking up one card and melding the jack of diamonds and the queen of spades for 40. In such cases the Widow is worth an additional 10 points—30 in all.

On the other hand, there are three types of Pinochle hands when the Widow is worth less than the assigned value of 20 points:

(1) When a hand contains more than three Marriages, the possibility of acquiring a complete Marriage in the Widow is remote. The hand already contains more than its share. Furthermore, the counters in the Marriages cannot be buried, another important part of the Widow value.

(2) When a hand contains more than eight aces and ten spots, the chances of picking up high cards that add to the playing value or can be profitably buried are greatly lowered. So again the Widow is worth less than 20 points.

(3) When a hand contains more than eight trumps, additional trump cannot be expected. And, because of the lopsidedness of the hand, added minor melds are unlikely.

In all three of the above cases it is advisable to drop the Widow value entirely.

The player who employs the Widow value judiciously, adding it at propitious moments, dropping it at others,

will be a far more accurate bidder than the one who disregards it entirely or uses it incorrectly.

### *Summary*

There are five factors that, added together, give you the probable value of any Pinochle hand: suit strength, playing value, actual meld, potential meld value, and Widow value. The safe bidder, disregarding the potential meld value, uses only four factors in his calculation.

Here again is the sample hand, and the four different ways in which it could be bid.

Spades	.....	A	A	10	K	Q	9
Hearts	.....	A	10	Q	J	9	
Diamonds	.....	A	Q	Q	Q	9	
Clubs	.....	A	J				

The safe bidder would figure it thus: suit strength—60; playing value—90; actual meld—150; Widow value—20. Total—320. Therefore a safe bid would be 300. He would make it 90 per cent of the time.

The normal bidder, trying to get the most value out of the cards he holds, would add the potential meld value, which in this case is 60 points, and, since spades are trump, would use a Widow value of 30 instead of 20. He would get a total of 390. The normal bid would therefore be 350, which would be made more than 65 per cent of the time.

The risk bidder, unable to resist the temptation, would go to 400. Although the normal-bid value of 390 is only 10 points less, the risk bid of 400 would be made less than 35 per cent of the time.

The wild bidder, putting the best possible interpretation on every factor, would go to 450, which would only be made 10 per cent of the time.

*Testing the System*

Although all methods of estimating the full strength of a Pinochle hand offered here have been developed by mathematical analysis, they have been subjected to the test of actual practice. Anyone sufficiently interested can make his own tests.

Take the sample hand and lay it aside. Thoroughly shuffle the remaining cards. Deal out two hands and the Widow. Pick up the Widow, make the necessary discards, and play the hand double-dummy. The percentages given here will be found highly accurate: the safe bid 90 per cent; normal bid, 65 per cent; risk bid, 35 per cent; wild bid, 10 per cent.

A foolproof system should apply not only to an average hand, but to a freak. The most unbalanced hand possible is when all twelve trumps are concentrated, with three indifferent cards completing the hand.

The count would be as follows: suit strength—160 points; playing value—60 points; actual meld—320 points. Total estimated value—540 points.

Since there are no major openings for additional melds, nothing is allowed for potential meld value; and since there are more than eight trumps in the hand, the Widow value is dropped.

The 540-point total falls short of the bid when the stakes would go up, so the actual bid would be 500. Of course, such a bid is an absolute certainty, but the accuracy of the system is further verified by the fact that more than half the time the top bid of 540 will be made. When spades or diamonds are trump the percentage is even higher.

*The Imperfect Hand*

Two recent magazine articles, published in the same month, discuss the perfect Pinochle hand. Both are different, and both are wrong! Article One offers the following hand:

Hearts . . . . .	A 10 K Q J 9
Spades . . . . .	A K Q
Diamonds . . . . .	A K Q
Clubs . . . . .	A K Q

The meld: Four Aces—100; Round House—240; Sequence—110; Dix of trump—10. Grand Total—460.

If the article had said this was the hand with the highest possible meld, it would have been more nearly correct. But not quite! Make diamonds trump, and the meld jumps 40 points.

The absolute disregard of the counters that can be won during the play is foolish. This seemingly perfect hand is below average as far as playing value is concerned. Even with the Sequence in hearts, and the Four Aces, it would be possible for the bidder to take in less than 70 points.

This sad result would occur if all the opposing trumps were in one hand, and the counters in the other three suits were equally divided. However, the hand would usually take in about 100 points, which is still under average.

How would the system evaluate this freak? Suit strength—40; playing value—60; actual meld—460. There are no openings for major melds, so potential meld value is nil. There are more than three Marriages, so the Widow value would be dropped. Total estimated value—560, and 90 per cent of the time it would be made. With diamonds trump the system would evaluate the hand at 600 which would also rate 90 per cent.

### *The Perfect Hand*

Article Two was vastly more realistic. It suggested that all twelve trumps in one hand, plus three different aces, would give the bidder a meld of 420, plus a playing value of 250. The highest possible total for any Pinochle hand then was 670 points.

Again almost, but not quite, correct. Suppose the trump suit were either spades or diamonds, and the two Dixes were exchanged for the cards necessary to meld double Pinochle. The meld value would rise to 480; the playing value would be reduced to 210, leaving an overall value of 690. This, then, is the best possible bid in Auction Pinochle.

And how would the system offered herein judge this dream hand? The first version, the one with twelve trumps and three different aces, would be estimated as follows: suit strength—160; playing value—60 for the trumps, which is the highest possible count in any one suit, and 30 for the three aces, a total of 90; actual meld—420. There are no openings for additional melds, so the potential meld value would be nothing. There are more than eight trumps, so the Widow value would not be counted. The estimated value then would be 670—right on the button.

As to the second version with ten trumps, three aces, and double Pinochle: the suit strength would be reduced to 120; the playing value would stay at 90; the actual meld would go up to 480. Again there are no openings, therefore no potential meld value. The Widow value would also be dropped. Total estimated value—690. Total sure to be made—690.

## BETTER PLAYING

Pinochle differs from nearly all other card games in that each card has a duplicate. This unusual feature has a tremendous bearing on the play. The card first played is the highest, so one cannot lie back with an ace and be sure of a trick.

The object of the play is not merely to take tricks, but to corral certain high cards—the counters. This, too, greatly affects the play.

There are certain principles of correct playing that

are fundamental. All but the most foolish player will lead a bare ace immediately. This card, unprotected, would be lost if an opponent should lead his ace.

Whenever possible, play a card that has been exposed in the meld in preference to a hidden card that the opponents do not know you have. This lessens the chance that the defenders will correctly appraise your holdings.

A one- or two-card side suit is a weakness unless you have plenty of trump. Never open such a short suit unless forced to do so.

When trump is led, each player in turn must top it. Often a low trump will clear out two high ones. Keep this in mind at all times.

The bidder should try to have the lead go into the hand at his left when he loses a trick, so he will be the last to play on the following trick.

And, above all else, learn how to time the hand so as to lose less counters on the losing tricks, and win more counters on the winning tricks.

## BETTER TIMING

Timing is of paramount importance in the play of a Pinochle hand. The most obvious advantage is the gaining of the 10-point bonus for taking the last trick. Often those 10 points are the difference between making the hand and going up.

The bidder should try to exhaust his opponent's trumps while retaining one or two in his own hand, thus assuring himself of the last trick. The one who leads out all his high cards, striving to take as many counters as he can as quickly as he can, often sacrifices his chance to capture the last trick—a perfect example of poor timing.

Frequently, good timing will mean additional counters. Suppose you hold the ace-ten-king of a nontrump

suit. One of the opponents also holds ace-ten-king. The one who opens that suit will get 15 points; the one who holds back will get 35.

A hand whose possibilities are not quite so apparent is one containing ten-king-jack while an opponent holds ace-king-queen. If you open the suit, you may lose all three tricks, but if you time the play and let him open the suit, and play it twice, you get two tricks to his one. He gets 10 points; you get 20. Quite a difference.

All of which means that, other considerations being equal, it is best to lead from a suit in which you have no high cards.

The ability to make a throw-in play, where you force an opponent to lead into your ten-ace, comes in handy toward the end of the play. Then it not only means extra counters, but the last trick as well.

The player who knows how to time his hand also knows how and when to play safe.

## THE SAFETY PLAY IN TRUMP

Much of the count taken by the opposition comes from the so-called "smear," when an opponent throws a high card on a trick won by his partner. The careful player sees to it that opportunities for smearing are reduced to a minimum.

Here is an example of a trump holding that is generally played incorrectly: The bidder holds six trumps with the double ace-ten—usually ace-ace-ten-king-queen-jack. The customary procedure is to play the high cards first, trying to clear the suit. But two out of three times the other six trumps will not be equally divided, and on the fourth lead one of the opponents has an opportunity to smear.

Of course there are times when the ten spot is unprotected, thus giving the bidder four leads, but chances are against such a lucky break. In the long run it is bet-



ter to lead the jack first. Seldom will more than 15 points fall on this trick. From then on the bidder has undisputed control of the trump suit except in the rare instance where all opposing trumps are in one hand.

Another chance for a safety play often occurs when only a few cards are left. Suppose you hold the ace-queen-jack of trump and three similar trumps are out against you. These three cards will most commonly be divided two-one, and the one who holds the ace will surely have it protected. If you lead the ace, you will catch the queen and jack. Then when you play the queen, the ace takes it, and the other opponent throws a counter from a side suit.

The safety play would be to lead the queen first, which forces the ace and another trump, leaving you with two sure tricks and depriving the opponents of a chance for a smear.

### *Another Safety Play*

Opportunities for safety plays present themselves in other suits than trumps. Suppose you have a side suit, five long, ace-ace-king-nine-nine. If an ace is led it will usually pick up two noncounters; the second ace will yield two 5-point counters; a total of 30 points.

The chances are the seven outstanding cards were divided four-three, so the bidder will lose two tricks taken by higher cards and one trick that will be trumped. On the first trick, the opposition will gather an average of 15 points; the second trick taken by the ten spot will afford an opportunity for a 10-point smear; the third trick trumped by one opponent will also enable his partner to take another 10 points. Total gained by the opponent, 55 points.

But suppose a safety play is made. The first nine led will give the opponents an average of 15 points; the second nine another 15 points. From then on the bidder

has control of the suit whenever there has been the usual four-three division. He can proceed to draw trump, then cash in the winning side suit. The 55 points that the opponents would win if the suit were led out has been reduced to 30 points—a not inconsiderable saving.

Of course, not all safety plays reap such rich rewards, but then they are not expected to. In this type of play the bidder forgoes a small chance to make an unusually large amount for the sake of greater certainty in making a smaller amount.

If the five-card side suit had consisted of ace-ace-ten-nine-nine, a safety play would usually result in a saving of 5 points. True, 5 points isn't always important, but when it is, it is very important.

## BETTER DISCARDING

One of the finer points of good Pinochle playing that is sadly neglected is the ability of the bidder to bury the three extra cards picked up in the Widow in such a way that the greatest value is derived therefrom. This burial is important for two reasons: it enables the bidder to strengthen his playing hand and permits him to discard counters that are added to his total when the play is finished.

The unthinking player often lays out all the meld he has, buries three counters when possible, and figures he has done a good job. Those who follow this custom are wrong as often as they are right. There are times when it is preferable to sacrifice some of the meld so as to gain more playing strength.

Many players who recognize this principle refuse to meld forty jacks on the theory that they gain more by discarding two or three of the jacks. Sometimes this is advantageous; more often it is not. The meld that should be scrutinized carefully is the extra Marriage. In numerous instances the 20 points gained in the meld will cause the loss of 40 points, or more, in the play.

The correct procedure is to hold up all minor melds while you calculate both ways. If you find you will gain more points in the play than you sacrifice by not melding, then discard the meld. But should you decide that the probable points gained in play will not compensate for the loss of the meld, then find your discards elsewhere.

Do not lay down the entire meld, then change your mind, and decide to bury some of the cards you have shown. This gives the defenders invaluable information.

## BETTER DEFENSE

In Pinochle, the play of the non-bidders is to a large extent automatic. They can do little except hope the bidder will make an error or run into unexpected distribution. Nevertheless, there are certain principles that they should follow.

Both defenders should remember the losing cards that the bidder has shown in the meld, and should save counters to take these tricks.

Each defender should smear his partner's tricks as heavily and as often as possible.

If either defender should gain the lead, and has a choice of nontrump suits to play, he should open the one in which he has ace-ten by playing the ace. His partner recognizing this lead as a signal, and holding the other ace of the same suit, throws it on. This tells the first defender to continue the suit by playing the ten spot. Pinochle players summarize this rule thus: "An ace always calls for an ace."

Similarly, a ten spot always calls for a ten spot when both aces are gone.

If a defender cannot lead from ace-ten, he should play a low card of the suit that he believes the bidder will trump. Often the meld will have betrayed the bidder's short suit.

Usually the defender's long suit is the bidder's short suit, and should be opened immediately.

If the defendant to the left of the bidder has the lead, and cannot play either an ace or a long suit, he should lay down the king of a nontrump suit in which he believes his partner may hold the ace. The correct lead of the defendant on the right of the bidder is almost always the king of trump.

### *Better Trump Defense*

The defenders can do more damage to the bidder's cause by playing trump correctly than in any other way.

If the bidder has a short trump suit, and the player on his right leads the king of trump, the bidder is on a spot. He must go over it, which means he must play either the ace or the ten. If he plays the ten spot he takes a chance on the other defender's taking the trick with the ace. And if the bidder plays the ace he may sacrifice control of the trump suit to an opponent who has the ace-ten. Either way he is in trouble.

There is still another way in which the defender's play of the trump suit is important. Suppose the bidder and one opponent each have the same long nontrump suit. The third player is void. By playing low cards of that suit the bidder forces one defendant to waste his trumps on tricks that the defense would win anyway.

To prevent this, the forward-thinking defender leads his trumps out as quickly as possible, thus putting himself in a position to smear the nontrump tricks that his partner will win.

Many defenders hold back from leading trump, reasoning that the partnership loses two trumps to the bidder's one. This is fallacious. Almost always the bidder with solid trumps will clear the suit so as to prevent other high cards from being trumped. If he doesn't do this he

probably doesn't want trump played. The best defense is to do what the bidder doesn't want done.

## DISTRIBUTION

A knowledge of the likely distribution of the various suits is of great value. Those who depend solely on "card sense" are often misled. Here is a table that transforms guesswork into certainty.

<i>You hold</i>	<i>Distribution</i>	<i>Times per 100</i>
Four of one suit	4 — 4	32
	5 — 3	47
	6 — 2	18
	7 — 1	3
	8 — 0	Negligible
Five of one suit	4 — 3	61
	5 — 2	31
	6 — 1	7
	7 — 0	1
	8 — 0	
Six of one suit	3 — 3	35
	4 — 2	48
	5 — 1	15
	6 — 0	2
Seven of one suit	3 — 2	67
	4 — 1	29
	5 — 0	4
Eight of one suit	2 — 2	40
	3 — 1	50
	4 — 0	10

It is not necessary to memorize this table. A general idea of the possibilities and probabilities is sufficient.

*Using the Table*

There are many ways of using the distribution table. Suppose you hold four spades. What are the chances the remaining eight will be split equally among your opponents? Consult the table. Only once out of three times will that happen. The most frequent distribution is five in one hand, three in the other. This occurs almost 50 per cent of the time.

One of the questions that perplex the tyro at Pinochle is how to play the trump suit. If you hold seven trumps, headed by ace-ace-ten, what are the chances of the suit's being cleared in three leads?

The combined chances of a four-one and a five-nothing distribution against you are 33 in 100; therefore the chances of your clearing the suit are two to one in your favor.

Suppose you hold six trumps headed by the double ace. Can you clear the suit in three leads, thus keeping safe control of the hand? This necessitates a three-three distribution, and the table at once tells you the chances are two to one against you.

The correct play of nontrump suits is also indicated. Suppose you hold the ace-ace-ten of a five-card side suit. Would it be advisable to lead out the three high cards? The only distribution that would allow this without having an opponent trump is four-three, and the chance is three to two in your favor.

But for running through the two aces alone, the four-three or the five-two distribution would be favorable. Now the chances rise to nine to one in your favor.

A knowledge of the probable distribution of the cards is of greatest value when the bidder is determining whether or not to play the hand.

### 3. TWO-HANDED PINOCHLE

THERE are two distinct forms of Two-handed Pinochle, one played with the regular forty-eight-card deck, the other, usually called Goulash, played with a sixty-four-card deck. The rules given here apply to the orthodox game; Goulash is explained in a later chapter.

The cards are shuffled and each player cuts. The highest card turned up deals.

The player who is designated scorekeeper arms himself with pad and pencil, although many expert players prefer to keep score verbally, calling out their melds as play proceeds.

The dealer mixes the pack, and the cards are cut and dealt three or four at a time until each player has twelve. The twenty-fifth card is turned face up and put underneath the balance of the deck. This card determines the trump suit.

The nondealer plays first, leading any card he wishes. The dealer then plays any card from his hand. To win the trick he must play a higher card of the same suit, or trump. When identical cards are played, the first one wins.

The winner of the first trick rakes it in and places the two cards face down before him. Then, if he has the nine of trump, he exchanges it for the trump card underneath the deck and scores ten points. If he doesn't

have the Dix, the opponent is given the opportunity to make the exchange. If neither has been dealt the nine spot, the first player to get it in the draw is permitted to make the exchange.

The winner of a trick is the only one permitted to meld. After he does so he draws one card from the top of the stock, or uncut portion of the deck.

The loser also draws one card from the stock. Thus each player again has twelve cards. This procedure is repeated on each succeeding trick until the stock is exhausted.

The winner of each trick always leads for the following trick.

All melds remain face up on the table. Melded cards can be played at any time.

During the playing of the first twelve tricks it is not necessary for the players to follow suit or to trump. On the twelfth trick the winner gets the face-down card, the loser gets the nine of trump. This does not count an additional 10 points, but the holder of the second Dix scores 10. If the nine was turned up on the deal, the dealer scores 10.

All melds that are on the table when the stock is exhausted are picked up. Players should have twelve cards apiece when the final play begins.

During the play of the last twelve tricks the usual rules of Pinochle are observed. Players must follow suit if possible, or trump. If trump is led, a higher trump must be played.

At the conclusion of the game each player counts his hand. Almost always the old-style count is used. Aces are 11, ten spots 10, kings 4, queens 3, jacks 2. The last trick is worth 10 points.

When the game is played for money each hand is usually complete in itself. The player whose combined meld and count is the highest is the winner.



## RULES OF THE MELD

In Two-handed Pinochle the process of melding is much different than it is in Auction; therefore the value of some of the melds varies.

Before a player can meld he must win a trick. There is no melding after the twelfth trick, so he has, at best, eleven opportunities. Since this would necessitate winning every trick during the preliminary play, the average player counts himself lucky if he gets six chances.

There are three additional rules that further limit the melder: (1) only one meld can be made at a time; (2) a card once melded cannot be counted again in a similar meld; (3) at least one card must be laid down for each meld.

For instance, suppose the player has already melded eighty kings and forty jacks. He then lays down the queen of spades. He can count it as Pinochle or as a spade Marriage, but not as both. Nor can he count it as two separate melds.

Similarly, if a Sequence has been melded for a count of 150, an extra king cannot be laid down as a Marriage.

If a player has a Round Trip in his hand he cannot meld it all at once. The best method is first to meld eighty kings, then the Royal Marriage, then the two Common Marriages. When the fourth queen is laid down it is counted for sixty queens. Thus the value of a Round Trip drops from 240 to 220.

However, an extra queen of the same suit as the last one played can later be melded for a Marriage, since the king had not previously been used for that particular meld.

*Bonus Melding*

Because of the obvious inequalities of the standard system of melding in Two-handed Pinochle, many players favor giving a bonus to certain

melds that require the player to forgo a sure meld for a more valuable possibility.

Double Pinochle, two queens of spades and two jacks of diamonds, count for 300 when laid down as one meld. When played separately they total only 80.

Grand Pinochle is another favored meld. When the king and queen of spades and the jack of diamonds are melded simultaneously, the count is always 80, no matter what suit is trump.

A Round Trip, when laid down at one time, not only regains its true value of 240, but picks up an additional 10 points—250 in all.

There is much to be said for the player who prefers the above types of bonus melding. All require the melder to pass up a sure score by waiting until the bonus combination is complete. He might wait too long and lose everything.

Not so reasonable are the extreme types of bonus melding. There is a school that says that eight aces, when melded at one time, count for 1,000; eight kings for 800; eight queens for 600; eight jacks for 400.

Despite the difficulty of accumulating these unusual melds, the practice of allowing such huge totals should be discouraged. The game is unbalanced; too great a value is placed on luck. Anyone fortunate enough to pick up such a meld would be sure to win the hand, no matter how well his opponent played.

## PENALTIES AND MISDEALS

The nondealer can ask for a new deal if any of his cards have been exposed, if any cards in the stock have been exposed, or if either player has an incorrect number of cards. However, if he wishes, the mistake can be corrected without the trouble of redealing.

The player with too few cards may draw enough

cards from the stock to give him the requisite twelve. The player with too many may shuffle his hand and replace in the stock the extra cards.

If either player has been dealt too many cards, and looks at his hand before the mistake is discovered, a new deal is mandatory.

If at any time a card is discovered face up in the pack, it is reversed and the stock is shuffled.

Should a player forget to draw a card from the stock, he draws two cards on the next round.

Should a player inadvertently draw two cards from the stock, he does not draw on the next round. Nor can he meld until the mistake has been righted and a trick won.

A player who claims a meld that is later discovered to be incorrect deducts that meld from his own score and adds the total to his opponent's score.

A player who forgets to claim the Dix of trump before the final play begins loses the 10 points.

When playing the last twelve tricks, the player who revokes by not following suit when possible, or by not playing a higher trump when possible, forfeits the count in his hand but retains his meld score.

## TWO-HANDED SCORING

Many old-timers play for score, usually 1,000 points, occasionally 1,200. There are several ways of keeping the tally: with paper and pencil, with special wooden Pinochle markers, or with chips.

Seldom do the players wait until the finish of a hand before counting their points. As each meld is laid down it is placed on the score. After the final trick has been raked in, the players check their counters and add the amount to their total.

When chips are used, each player is supplied with the equivalent of 1,000 points. As he melds, or scores, the

player throws the value thereof in chips into a waste pile. The one who disposes of his chips first wins the game.

Because the chips are valued in units of 10, the odd points are often dropped. Generally an odd 7 points or more counts as 10 points; less than 7 counts nothing. A score of 147 to 103 would become 150 to 100.

The use of pad and pencil enables the score to be kept accurately but frequently results in disputes as to the correct count. Cynics claim: "The guy with the pencil always wins."

When the scoring game is played for money, the stakes are generally low, from a quarter to a dollar per game. Sometimes the pay-off is on a point basis, the loser paying the winner the difference between their scores at a rate previously agreed upon.

This is one of the few two-handed games that can be played for amusement only and still retain its appeal.

## THE CALL-OUT

Those who favor the scoring game usually permit a player to declare himself out as soon as he totals 1,000 points, even if the hand has not been finished.

The player who thus declares himself must win one more trick by a lead from his own hand before the call-out is valid.

If he fails to win such a trick by the end of the hand, the player with the highest score wins.

If one player declares himself out but fails to win a trick immediately, the opponent may also declare himself out, provided he has scored 1,000 points or more. When this happens the first player to take a trick by a lead from his own hand wins the game. When such a trick is taken play stops automatically.

If a player calls out and, when the score is checked,

is found to have less than 1,000 points, he forfeits the game to his opponent.

In some localities the player who declares himself out need not win another trick. This practice is not recommended, inasmuch as it removes much of the excitement when the score is close.

The call-out greatly favors the alert player who can play the hand well and add his points at the same time. When two experts get together it is not unusual for a 1,000-point game to be closely contested. Hence the necessity for the call-out rule.

## DOUBLES

If the players wish to add excitement to a game of Two-handed Pinochle, they can introduce the variation known as doubling. Just as spades double greatly improves the Auction game, so doubling improves the head-to-head game.

The cards are shuffled, cut, and dealt exactly the same as in a regular game. The first trick is played—and then comes the novelty.

The winner of the first trick, after drawing from the stock but before leading for the second trick, may double the agreed-upon stake.

The opponent now has three choices: (1) he may refuse the double, concede the hand, and pay off; (2) he may accept the double, in which case play proceeds; (3) he may redouble, making the stakes four times the original amount.

If the opponent redoubles, the first raiser may either resign and pay double the predetermined stake, or he may accept the challenge and play proceeds. He cannot re-redouble.

Once the game has been doubled, only the player who accepted the previous double may double again, and he must win a trick before so doing.

At no time may the loser of a trick propose a double; that privilege is reserved for the player who takes in the trick.

All doubling ceases once the stock has been exhausted. The final challenge is offered after picking up the exposed trump and must be accepted or rejected before play begins.

The adventurous souls who delight in the doubling game should agree upon a relatively small initial stake. A dime can pyramid into hundreds of dollars if two optimistic and stubborn players lock horns.

To prevent the stakes from rising too rapidly, some players limit the doubling, permitting it only after the first and twelfth tricks. Since this does not allow for fluctuations in the meld, it is not recommended.

The bluff double is a powerful defensive weapon when used properly. But he who is careless and bluffs at the wrong time may let himself in for plenty of headaches.

The skillful player soon learns how to prepare a trap for an unwary opponent. He conceals a strong hand by withholding a heavy meld, hoping for a double. Should he get it, he immediately redoubles, thus quadrupling his profits.

The doubling feature transforms an ordinary Pinochle game into a thrilling contest, as anyone who tries it will soon discover. But it has its drawbacks.

Since each hand is complete in itself, there can be no playing for score. If the doubling were continued from hand to hand, it might mount to such astronomical heights as to become ridiculous.

It is strictly a money game, therefore cannot be played for amusement only.

The tyro should never tangle with an expert; nor should the penny-ante player try to outdo the experienced gambler.

## TWO-HANDED PINOCHLE

### THREE-HANDED

Despite the apparent contradiction, Two-handed Pinochle is often played three-handed, and a very good game it is.

The cards are shuffled and each player cuts. The one who cuts the highest card is the dealer. Again the pack is riffled, cut by the opponent on the dealer's right, and dealt three at a time until each player has twelve cards.

The thirty-seventh card is turned face up for trump.

If the dealer turns up a nine spot he scores 10 points; otherwise the player nearest his left who has the Dix may exchange it for the trump card and claim 10 points. If no one has a nine of trump on the deal, the first player to draw one may exchange it for the trump card and claim 10 points. The second Dix is also worth 10 points and need only be shown.

The player to the left of the dealer leads for the first trick; thenceforth the winner of each trick leads for the following trick.

The meld and the count are the same as in Two-handed Pinochle. Rules and penalties are also identical.

Each player is out for himself alone. Since there is no bidder to set, there is no necessity for smearing. However, toward the end of the game it is customary for the two low scorers to aid each other against the high scorer.

Because of the few chances to meld, and the fact that the counters are divided among three players, the usual 1,000 points is reduced to 500.

Money players are not attracted to three-handed Pinochle, so the game of hands is seldom played.

## BETTER PLAY

The tyro can hope to win occasionally in Auction Pinochle, rarely in Two-handed Pinochle.

Luck is reduced to a minimum. Among expert players the play of the last twelve cards is absolutely double-dummy; each knows what the other is holding.

During the preliminary play the one who wishes to be classed as a good player must watch each trick and remember the cards placed thereon. By so doing he too will be able to tell what cards his opponent has when the melding is over and final play begins. The importance of memory in Two-handed Pinochle cannot be too strongly stressed.

Ordinarily the melding score far outweighs the count by cards, so the majority of the points is gathered before the stock is exhausted. It follows, then, that the early play is more important than the final tricks.

There are two ways to play a Two-handed Pinochle hand: the melding game in which a player sacrifices counters to hold cards that may later be melded, and the trick-taking game in which a player tries to take in as much count as he can, even at the expense of possible melds. Most players, including the good ones, favor a certain style at all times, regardless of the make-up of the hand. This is a mistake.

Most hands figure to produce the best score when all melding cards are held, but there are some hands that will give the player a better score if played wide open. The ability to recognize these particular hands is the mark of the expert.

Should the dealt hand contain more than its share of picture cards, with few aces and weak trump, it is obviously a melding hand.

In such a case the player should hold onto every possible meld, even the much-despised forty jacks, for it is apparent that whatever score he gets will come from melding, not from the play of the hand.

Should the original twelve cards contain a superfluity of aces and tens, it is a playing hand. The best course then is to take in as much count as possible, since it is



unlikely that enough picture cards will be picked from the stock to furnish any appreciable meld.

Most Two-handed Pinochle hands fall in between these two extremes. Only experience can tell the individual how best to play these cards. But there are a few hints that will be of value.

Because of the rule permitting one to play cards that have already been melded, it is not always wise to lay down the highest meld first. Suppose spades are trump; you hold a Marriage in spades and a Marriage in hearts, with no additional kings or queens. Lay down the Common Marriage first. This enables you to play these two cards and provides two more chances to pick up the jack of diamonds to go with the queen of spades.

Only the most optimistic player holds long for forty jacks. The jack of diamonds and the jack of trump are usually held; any others are discarded quickly.

There is one trick in melding in Two-handed Pinochle that, though seemingly unfair, is universally permitted, at least as far as the rulebooks are concerned.

Should you hold a Sequence, meld the Marriage first, counting 40, then lay down the ace-ten-jack and count 150. Before thus splitting your meld make certain you will get a second opportunity.

Whether one is playing the melding game or the wide-open game, he should try to save as much trump as possible. When only six cards are left in the stock, trump can often be employed to prevent the opponent from melding. Suppose the opposition has already laid down the king and queen of trump, and you know from your own hand there is an excellent chance he has picked up the ace-ten-jack. By playing trump from your hand twice you prevent him from melding the 150. He must either let you win the trick, in which case he cannot meld, or take the trick with a trump, thereby breaking up the Sequence.

It is good strategy to win the tenth trick even if the

opponent cannot have a heavy meld, and lead the ace of trump for the eleventh trick. This enables you to make good whatever meld you may pick up on the tenth trick, and knocks out your opponent's chance of melding on either trick.

To make certain of winning the tenth trick, many players deliberately lose the ninth trick.

If a poor melding hand forces you to play for count, there is one error that must be avoided. Should you have duplicate aces, do not play both. This would notify your opponent that he cannot hope to get 100 aces, thereby allowing him to play whatever aces he might be holding to the best advantage. Contrariwise, should the opponent play duplicate aces, discard yours.

It is often advisable to hold up duplicate kings and queens for the same reason. Should you hold two kings of hearts and the queen, meld the Marriage and play the king of hearts from the board.

A clever player can often tell what duplicate the opponent is holding by analyzing the play of the melding cards.

Whether one is playing for meld or for count, the best possible lead is a ten spot of a nontrump suit. Seldom does the opponent take this with an ace, so you not only gain a chance to meld but add 10 points to your score.

There is one time, however, when a ten spot should not be led. If your opponent has melded 100 aces he will surely take the trick with his ace, giving him a count of 21. Try to force his aces with worthless nines and jacks.

It is usually good strategy to play the longest suit, unless it is trump, whenever you get the lead. Your opponent will have difficulty in winning the trick and may have to sacrifice an ace or a trump in order to do so.

Above all, remember what cards have been played. One need not have an exceptional memory in order to

do this. It may be hard at first, but practice makes perfect. If necessary, concentrate on aces and trumps.

For those who cannot, or will not, memorize all the cards, here is a helpful bit of advice: during the final play almost all tens, nines, and jacks of nontrump suits will have already been played, so look for aces, kings, and queens in the opponent's hand.

## GOULASH

This colorful name is given to a variety of Two-handed Pinochle that is said to have originated in the Hungarian restaurants of New York. It is still a favorite in the cafés that permit the customers to indulge in their favorite card game after dinner.

A sixty-four-card deck is used. It consists of the regular deck plus two eights and two sevens of each suit.

Sixteen cards are dealt to each player. The thirty-third card is turned up for trump. The sixty-fourth card is taken from the bottom of the deck and placed underneath the trump card. This is called the dead card.

The thirty remaining cards are divided into two equal piles of fifteen each, and one pile goes to each player.

If the dealer has the seven of trump he exchanges it for the upturned trump card. If he doesn't have it, his opponent may make the exchange. If neither has it, the first to draw it may make the exchange.

Each seven of trump counts for 10 points, which can be claimed by merely showing the card. Should the dealer turn the seven spot for trump, he gets the 10 points.

The nondealer leads for the first trick; thereafter the winner of the preceding trick is the leader.

After each trick the player draws one card from his own pile. At no time does he touch his opponent's stack.

The winner of the fifteenth trick takes the exposed seven of trump; the loser gets the dead card.

The hand is then played out, each player trying to corral as many points as possible.

The value of the meld in Goulash is identical with the value of the meld in regular Two-handed Pinochle, with the single exception that the seven of trump replaces the nine.

The cards are given the same value—ace 11, ten spot 10, king 4, queen 3, jack 2. The sevens, eights, and nines are so much deadwood. The last trick is worth 10 points.

Because of the presence of so many worthless cards, Goulash is a much harder game to play than the more orthodox version of Two-handed Pinochle. For one thing, it is far more difficult to remember the cards that have already been played.

In Two-handed Pinochle a clever player will constantly embarrass his opponent by leading worthless cards that must be trumped or taken by cards useful for melding. This strategy is almost impossible in Goulash, because the opponent has plenty of worthless cards of his own to throw away. So he who gets a poor hand can do little to improve his chance of winning.

The opportunities for melding in Goulash are more frequent than in Two-handed Pinochle, so the one who saves his melding cards has an edge over the player who consistently tries to take in counters.

There are sixteen cards in a Goulash hand, only twelve in a regular Pinochle hand; therefore the melds are usually bigger and better. The two factors combined—more cards to meld, and more chances to meld—mean larger scores. Because of this, most scoring games are played for 1,500 points instead of 1,000 points.

Should one side make a clean sweep, taking all the tricks, the opponents' meld score is not counted. However, each partner need not take a trick in order to make good the meld count. One trick for the partnership is sufficient.

The game is for 1,000 points. The final hand is always finished; calling out is not permitted.

In case of a tie, the bidding side is the winner.

## PARTNERSHIP AUCTION PINOCHLE

The game combines the best features of Partnership and Auction. The pack is shuffled and spread face down. Each player draws one card. The two highest are partners arrayed against the two lowest. The one who has the highest card is the dealer.

The pack is mixed and cut by the opponent on the right of the dealer. Nine cards are dealt to each player, three rounds of three each. Four cards are placed aside to form a Widow. The remaining eight are dealt around, two to each player.

The bid, starting with the dealer, travels clockwise, and continues until all but one player have passed. A player who passes may not bid again, but his partner may. Each bidder must overcall the previous high bidder. There is no minimum bid.

The successful bidder wins the Widow, which must be turned face up. He also has the privilege of naming the trump suit. The bidder commits his side to making the amount of his contract.

Each player melds, each side scores the combined melds.

Should the hand be set, the amount of the bid is deducted from the partnership's score. There is no credit for melds or for counters taken in play on a hand that is lost.

Should the bidding side make its contract, it gains as many points as it actually made, not just the amount of the bid.

The nonbidders score their melds and counters taken in play, but must take at least one trick to make the meld official.

Partnership Auction is almost always played for score. If both sides gain the requisite number of points on the same hand, the bidding side wins. The nonbidders cannot claim game until the bidder's entire score is recorded; hence there is no necessity for calling out.

## PARTNERSHIP PINOCHLE— CORNERS

This is one of the most popular of the partnership games. The cards are cut by all four players. The two highest play the two lowest. In case of a tie, cards are cut again.

Partners face each other across the table. He who cuts the highest card deals.

Each player is given twelve cards, three at a time. There is no Widow.

The player to the left of the dealer opens the bidding.

✓ The minimum bid is 150.

Each player in turn can raise 10 points or more.

A player who once passes cannot re-enter the auction.

If the first three players pass, the dealer must bid a minimum of 190.

After the auction is completed, the successful bidder names the trump suit.

All players meld, and the total of each partnership is entered on the score sheet.

No meld is official until the team making the meld has taken a trick.

The bidder leads for the first trick; thereafter the winner of each trick leads for the succeeding trick.

The regular rules of auction pinochle apply to the play.

The team that makes its bid scores the total of the meld and the counters taken in during play. If it goes bate, the amount bid is deducted from the previous score.

The nonbidders score the amount of their meld and the counters taken in during play.

Occasionally Corners is a game of hands, but more often it is a scoring game.

The first team to amass 1,000 points wins the game.

There is no call-out. If both sides go over 1,000 on the same hand, the one with the highest total wins, regardless of which side was the bidder.

The usual stakes are \$1 for winning the game, plus \$.25 for each hand won, \$.25 penalty for each bate.

Corners is one of the few auction pinochle games that makes extensive use of cue bidding. Here are a few samples:

An opening bid of 160 shows a meld of 60 queens; 180 shows 80 kings; 200 shows 100 aces; 210 shows a flush. An opening bid of 170 shows a good hand with plenty of meld but no strong trump suit. It is an invitation to partner to take the bid and name trump.

A response of 200 to an opening bid of 150 to 190 shows either a weak playing hand with plenty of meld or a powerful playing hand no matter which suit is made trump. In either case the original bidder should take the bid and name trump.

A response of 250 to an original bid of 200 to 240 conveys the same information.

If the opening bid is less than 200, a response of 210 shows 60 queens; 220 shows 80 kings; 230 shows 100 aces; 240 shows a flush.

There are numerous other individual conventions used by players who play together often.

## 5. CHECK PINOCHLE

ON JANUARY 31, 1945, the Association of American Playing Card Manufacturers officially introduced a new card game—Check Pinochle. Actually the game had been played for several years previous to its supposed natal day. Albert Morehead, in his fine book *The Modern Hoyle*, gives the rules for a game called Club Partnership Pinochle, which is practically identical with Check Pinochle.

The Association's action was the first major step taking Pinochle out of the home and putting it in the club-rooms of the nation. The game is a pleasing combination of both Bridge and Pinochle; more exciting than Bridge alone, more thought-provoking than mere Pinochle.

As the name implies, the basic game is Pinochle, with Bridge modifications. In case of dispute as to the rules or method of dealing, Pinochle customs apply.

A regular forty-eight-card Pinochle deck is used. In many clubs two standard poker decks, with cards below the nine spot removed, are often used.

There are many methods of selecting partners, but the one that is generally favored is for one of the players to shuffle the deck and deal the cards. The first one to get an ace is the dealer, the first two to get aces are partners.



Partners face each other across the table.

The dealer mixes the deck; player on the right cuts.

The cards are dealt three at a time until each player has twelve.

## ORIGINAL BIDDING

The bidding rules in Check Pinochle are a combination of the rules used in both the parent games with some unique features added. These are the rules that were in vogue when Check Pinochle was first introduced.

The player on the left of the dealer opens the bidding, which then continues clockwise.

The minimum bid is 200 points.

A player who once passes may not bid again.

A player must hold a Marriage in order to bid.

Should the first three players pass, the dealer must bid at least 200 whether or not he has a Marriage. However, on the second round he cannot rebid unless he holds a Marriage. If he has a Marriage he may open the bidding at any level; if not, he may only bid 200, the required minimum.

If the dealer opens the bidding, the auction continues exactly as though there had been no previous passes.

The successful bidder commits his side to making at least the number of points bid.

The bidding side, if successful, scores the total amount of its meld and card count. However, checks are awarded on the basis of the actual bid.

Should a team fail to make its contract, the amount of the bid is canceled from its previous score and double the amount of the checks is awarded to the opponents.

A team that goes *bate* loses all points and checks made on that hand.

If a partnership has no previous score, the loss is entered in a minus column.

## ORIGINAL SCORING

It is in the scoring that Check Pinochle differs widely from plain Pinochle. Besides the meld points and card counts, there is a third value—checks. Here is how checks were awarded during the early days:

	<i>Checks</i>
Winning game .....	7
Making bid of 200–240 .....	2
Making bid of 250–290 .....	4
Making bid of 300–340 .....	7
Making bid of 350–390 .....	10
Making bid of 400–440 .....	13
Making bid of 450–490 .....	16
Making bid of 500 or more .....	19
Melding a Round Trip .....	4
Melding a Sequence .....	2
Melding double Pinochle .....	2
Melding Pinochle .....	1
Melding four different aces .....	1
Melding four different kings .....	1
Melding four different queens .....	1
Melding four different jacks .....	1
Taking all the tricks .....	4

Check Pinochle is always played for score; the usual game is 1,000 points. The winner of the game does not necessarily win the money. The team with the largest number of checks is the actual winner, since the pay-off is for checks, not points.

If both sides reach 1,000 on the same hand, the higher score wins, regardless of who the bidder was.

## MODERN BIDDING

During the past few years the rules of Check Pinochle have been revised somewhat. Here are the modern laws pertaining to the bidding,

furnished by Lee Hazen, chairman of the Card Committee of the New York Bridge Whist Club.

The player to the left of the dealer opens the bidding, which then continues clockwise.

The minimum bid is 200.

A player who once passes cannot re-enter the bidding.

The first three players must hold a Marriage or they cannot bid.

Should the first three players pass, the dealer must take the bid for a minimum of 200, regardless of whether or not he can meld a Marriage; if he does hold a Marriage he can bid more than 200.

The successful bidder must name the trump suit before laying down his melds.

All melds are laid face up on the table, the total for each side recorded on the score sheet.

If the bidding side melds less than the amount bid it must take in sufficient counters during the play to make up the difference.

When bidding side is bated the amount of the bid is deducted from its score, all melds made by it on that hand are canceled, and the adversaries are awarded double the amount of checks the bidding side would have won if successful.

Example: Should a bid of 240 be bated, the nonbidders win four checks.

## MODERN SCORING

The awarding of checks has also undergone a drastic change. Here is the table used by the New York Bridge Whist Club and numerous similar organizations:

Winning game .....	10
Making bid of 200-240 .....	2
Making bid of 250-290 .....	4
Making bid of 300-340 .....	7

Making bid of 350-390 .....	10
Making bid of 400-440 .....	15
Making bid of 450-490 .....	20
Making bid of 500-540 .....	25
Making bid of 550-590.....	30
Melding four different jacks .....	1
Melding four different queens .....	1
Melding four different kings .....	1
Melding four different aces .....	2
Melding all eight aces .....	8
Melding a Round House .....	5
Melding double Pinochle .....	2
Melding a Sequence (Flush) .....	2
Melding a double Sequence .....	10
Melding a Sequence and four different aces ....	5
Making a Slam (winning twelve tricks) .....	5
Schneidering Opponents .....	5

A team is schneidered if it fails to score or if it is in the minus column when the game ends.

## THE PLAY

The rules of Check Pinochle regarding the play are taken almost entirely from Auction Pinochle. The meld count is identical. There are no bonus melds other than those above mentioned.

After the auction all players lay down their melds. Each player counts his individual meld, then adds his partner's meld for the total count.

The bidder leads for the first trick; thereafter the winner of each trick leads for the succeeding trick.

All players must follow suit if possible. If they are void they must trump if possible. If they have no trump they may discard whatever they please.

When trump is led, each succeeding player must top it if possible. Should the second player lay down a higher trump than the one led, the third player must top it if

possible. And should the third player lay down a higher trump than the second player, the fourth man must top it if possible.

On the other hand, should the second man top the trump led, and the third man holds a higher trump than the one led, but not as high as the second one played, he need not beat the first trump. He may not discard an off suit, however, but must play trump if he has it. The same rule applies to the fourth player.

## STRATEGY

Bridge players take to Check Pinochle for many reasons, one of which is that there is a great deal of bidding to the score, a strategy they well understand.

If both sides have 800 or more on the score the bidding should be very liberal.

Should partners have a score below 300, while the opponents have 900 or more, it is good policy to pass, even if they have a good hand. It is entirely possible for them to make 400 while the opponents make only 100. This would still leave them short of 1,000, while the opponents, needing but few points, would win the game.

When the low side has 500 points and the opponents 800, it is usually good business to pass. This is especially true when the high scorers are dealing, since they must make a minimum of 200 and might go bade.

However, there are times when this strategy does not hold good. If the low scorers have a terrific playing hand and a slam seems probable, it would pay to take the bid. If the slam materialized, the high scorers would not take in the trick necessary to make their meld official. And when a flush is held it is seldom advisable to pass, since a flush has much offensive value, little defensive value.

Again, should the low side have sufficient meld and playing power to make a bid of 400 or more fairly safe, it might be advisable to bid. The 15 checks awarded for

a 400 hand would counterbalance the 10 points awarded for game. And remember, the pay-off is for checks, not points.

A similar situation is when the low scorers have amassed an overwhelming number of checks. In such a situation it might be profitable to permit the opposition to win the game and collect a sure profit.

## BIDDING CONVENTIONS

The phase of Check Pinochle most strongly reminiscent of Bridge is the system of bidding conventions used by better players. A team using these informational bids will be much more accurate than one that does not.

The conventions on opening bids are limited to first and second positions and are the same for both, with the sole exception of opening bids of 200.

A BID OF 200 IN FIRST POSITION requires a hand with sufficient melding and playing strength to make 200 with little or no assistance from partner. The greater the meld, the less playing strength needed, and vice versa.

There are three main types of hands worth 200: (1) a solid or semisolid six-card suit, with an outside ace and 60 to meld; (2) a fair five-card suit, or two strong four-card suits, with 60 or more to meld; (3) a weak suit with 100 to meld. It is understood that in all cases the bidder names trump; therefore if partner becomes declarer he cannot expect more than 20 points in meld.

A BID OF 200 IN SECOND POSITION should be made if the hand contains a five-card suit, with a Marriage and unequal distribution; or two good four-card suits with at least 60 to meld if bidder names trump.

The requirements for bidding in second position are much less than in first position because partner is the dealer and would be forced to take the bid in the event of three passes. Hence it is more or less a protective bid.

An opening bid of more than 200 conveys definite information.

## INFORMATIONAL BIDDING

AN OPENING BID OF 210 requires a meld of 100 or more no matter who names trump. This bid may be made on a hand containing a weak five-card suit, but is usually an invitation for the partner to name trump. A hand with only 100 in meld and no playable suit should contain at least one ace.

AN OPENING BID OF 220 requires 100 in meld regardless of trump, plus a strong five-card or fair six-card suit.

AN OPENING BID OF 250: a flush, or a hand strong enough to make 250 with little or no assistance.

AN OPENING BID OF 260 shows 100 aces.

AN OPENING BID OF 270 denotes a flush with extra meld or playing strength, but not enough to guarantee 300.

AN OPENING BID OF 280: 100 aces plus a strong five-card suit or better.

AN OPENING BID OF 290 shows a Round House.

AN OPENING BID OF 300: a flush plus enough to make 300.

AN OPENING BID OF 310 shows 100 aces plus at least 50 additional points, preferably in the meld.

AN OPENING BID OF 320 shows a flush with considerable extra values, but not enough to guarantee 350.

AN OPENING BID OF 350: a flush plus enough to make 350.

AN OPENING BID OF 360: a flush and 100 aces.

AN OPENING BID OF 400: a flush with enough added values to make the bid safe. It may or may not contain 100 aces.

AN OPENING BID OF 410 shows 100 aces, a flush, and considerable added values but not enough to guarantee 450.

## RESPONSES TO OPENING BIDS

The conventions on responses to opening bids are limited to third and fourth positions and are the same for both.

RESPONSES TO 200: A bid of 210 shows a balanced hand with good assistance and is forcing for one round. Invites partner to bid 250 if he has more than minimum values. This bid is usually made with at least 40 to meld, plus two aces.

A bid of 220 is pre-emptive and indicates a desire to name trump. Indicates a hand that has no playing value for the original bidder and usually contains a six-card suit.

A bid of 240, 290, 340, or 390 are forcing to the next higher level.

A bid of 260, 280, 310, or 360 shows 100 aces with the necessary additional values.

A bid of 270, 300, 320, or 350 shows a flush with the necessary additional values.

A bid of 250 means a strong hand that will make the contract with little assistance. Usually contains a bare flush.

RESPONSES TO 210: A bid of 220 shows a minimum of 20 points, an ace, and a four-card suit.

A bid of 240, 290, 340, or 390 is forcing to the next higher level.

A bid of 260, 280, or 310 shows 100 aces with the necessary additional values.

A bid of 270 or 320 indicates a flush.

A bid of 250 or 300 shows a strong hand guaranteeing the contract but definitely denying a flush.

RESPONSES TO OPENING BID OF 220: A bid of 230 shows a minimum meld of 20 and one ace. All other responses are the same as for an opening bid of 210.

RESPONSES TO OPENING BID OF 250: A bid of 260 indicates at least one Marriage and one ace.

A bid of 270 shows a flush in responder's hand.



A bid of 290 is forcing to 300.

A bid of 300 shows a strong flush, six cards or better.

A bid of 310 indicates 100 aces.

A bid of 340 is forcing to 350.

RESPONSES TO OPENING BID OF 260: A bid of 270 shows one Marriage and an ace with a fair four-card suit.

A bid of 300: a five-card suit and one ace, with at least 50 points additional meld if trump is named by responder.

A bid of 320 shows a flush in responder's hand and is forcing.

A bid of 350 shows a strong playing hand with sufficient strength to guarantee the contract. It definitely denies a flush.

RESPONSES TO OPENING BIDS OF 270, 300, 350: A raise of 10 points indicates at least one Marriage and an ace with fair distribution.

A raise of 20 points shows a flush.

A raise of 50 points shows a very strong flush. Guarantees the contract is safe with very little assistance.

Jump raises to 290, 340, 390, etc., are forcing to the next highest level.

## OVERCALLS

FIRST HAND BIDS 200, SECOND HAND BIDS 210: A raise to 220 by the third bidder shows good assistance. Two aces and 20 meld.

A raise to 230 is pre-emptive, showing a six-card suit with no supporting strength.

The same rules hold if second hand bids 200 and third hand bids 210 except that raise to 220 should have more strength.

FIRST HAND BIDS 200, SECOND HAND BIDS 220: The 220 bid indicates the type of hand that normally would have opened with 210 and should be treated as such.

All other overcalls are a matter of good judgment and can hardly be conventionalized.

All bids are greatly affected by the score, as is explained in the chapter on strategy.

The conventions recommended herein have been adopted by the New York Bridge Whist Club as a result of several years' experience and are deemed to be the simplest and most effective. They do not cover all possible situations, hence many hands will require irregular and unconventional bidding.

The ability to bid accurately can be acquired only by experience and depends largely on the skill, daring, and imagination of the player.

## PENALTIES

When Check Pinochle first became popular about the only offense deemed worthy of punishment was a revoke. Since then various offenses have been recognized, and penalties prescribed therefor.

If a player deals out of turn and the mistake is discovered before bidding has started, the player who should have dealt gathers and shuffles the cards and deals.

If the bidding has started the deal stands; auction and play continue. The player to the left of the incorrect dealer becomes the next dealer.

If a player bids out of turn, the bid is canceled and reverts to the correct bidder. The offender may bid in his correct turn, but his partner is barred for the entire auction.

If a player passes out of turn, the bid is canceled and reverts to the correct bidder. The offender must then pass in his regular turn.

Should a player bid without a Marriage the opponents have a choice of penalties: (1) compel offender to play the hand at the highest bid; (2) call the deal off, in which case the same player re-deals; (3) take the bid at the highest or lowest level. Before the penalty is decided the offender names trump and all melds are shown.

If a player announces the trump suit either before the auction is closed or under the mistaken impression that he is the successful bidder, the opponents may (1) compel the offender to make the bid sufficient, (2) compel the offenders to meld, and then decide either to accept or reject the bid.

When a player exposes a card, either during the meld or by making a lead out of turn, the opponents can elect either of the following penalties: (1) Exposed card must be played at the first opportunity. (2) The nonoffenders can ask for a lead, in which case the exposed card goes back into player's hand.

When more than one card is exposed, they must remain face up on the table and must be led or played to, at the discretion of the opponents.

A player revokes if he fails to follow suit when possible; fails to cover a trump lead when possible; or fails to lead or play as directed when paying a penalty. A revoke becomes established when the offending side leads or plays to a subsequent trick or announces its intention of so doing, either by naming a card or claiming or conceding a trick.

If a penalty revoke becomes established, the trick stands as played and that trick and all succeeding tricks go to the opponents. (Many clubs still favor the ruling that says that the offenders automatically lose the hand.)

When the auction closes, the final bid becomes the contract. The successful bidder names the trump before any melds are made. If he melds before naming trump he may not exact any penalties for exposure of improper melds.

In a friendly low-stake game the players seldom impose any penalty except that for a revoke, but in high-stake games and tournaments, all rules are rigidly obeyed.

## 6. CHEATING AT PINOCHLE

PINOCHLE, like other card games, has its quota of sharpshooters. The favorite weapon in the arsenal of the Pinochle cheat is the marked deck.

Some Pinochle players have the erroneous idea that the cheat who uses "readers" will eventually betray himself by always bidding when his key cards are in the Widow and not bidding when his key cards are missing. Clever swindlers avoid this give-away by deliberately making high bids when they know the cards they seek are not in the Widow. They then put on a crying act that completely disarms anyone who might have become suspicious.

This does not mean the user of marked cards does not betray himself. He is continually eying the backs of the cards in the Widow. Occasionally he reaches over and spreads them, presumably to make sure there are only three, actually to check on the value of the hidden pasteboards. If, then, you ever have cause to be suspicious, watch the opponent's eyes, not his bids.

There is a test that will enable anyone to detect a marked deck immediately, if not sooner. Hold the pack by the bottom end between the fingers and thumb of the left hand. Place the right thumb at the top of the deck, bend the cards backward, and riffle them rapidly, meanwhile keeping your eyes fastened to one portion of the design. If the pattern is absolutely regular

on all the cards, you will see the same thing over and over again. But if the design has been altered, no matter how minute the detail, you will see specks and spots jumping madly about.

Should you find a marked deck in play, do not invite trouble by accusing anyone. Tell your friends and quit the game.

## CHEATING AT AUCTION

A few years back a man known to millions because of his motion-picture activities was caught increasing his already enormous income by cheating at cards.

The scene: a studio restaurant. The cast: producer, director, and actor. The game: Auction Pinochle. The stakes: \$10 a point.

The suspicions of one member of the trio were aroused by the erratic but successful bidding of the big winner. One deck was sent to me for examination, and I reported it wasn't marked. I was then asked to make a personal investigation.

The mystery of how the cheat operated was soon solved; the mystery of why he did it will never be solved.

The sharp, on his deal, would gather the cards so three different aces were on the bottom. Subsequent riffles would not disturb these chosen cards. When the pack was cut these three cards would be near the center. Picking up the two halves one at a time, the cardster would hold a slight, almost imperceptible break right where the aces were. Then he would deal twenty-one cards, three at a time, and place the next three cards in the Widow. Sometimes all three aces would go in; more often only two; always at least one.

Knowing one or more of the auctioned cards gave the cheat a tremendous advantage. Naturally he didn't always use aces; any three good cards would do.

That movie mogul isn't the only unscrupulous player who knows this simple swindle. To prevent anyone from bilking you, cut the cards not once but several times. Or better still, give the deck a quick riffle.

## CHEATING AT FOUR-HANDED AUCTION

Most Pinochle players believe that cheating at the game known as "dealer stays out" is impossible except with marked cards. What good would it do for the dealer to manipulate the cards when he has nothing to do with the play of the hand? It has been done.

At a large convention in Atlantic City, attended by both men and women, I had been engaged to keep an eye on all card games. The previous year there had been numerous squawks about unfair play.

I soon discovered that one woman was using a stripper deck. Forty-four of the cards had been cut so they were one thirty-second of an inch narrower than usual. The other cards, four different aces, had been allowed to remain the normal width in the middle, but cut in a curve so they tapered toward the ends. When these four "belly strippers" were shuffled in the pack, the bulging middle projected beyond the other cards. Only exceptionally keen eyes could see this, but nimble fingers could easily feel the minute difference in size. Anyone who knew how, when cutting the deck, could slide out the four aces.

The cheat would wait until the player on her left dealt. She would strip the aces out and bring them to the bottom, then pull a section from the center and place on top. Seemingly, an honest cut. When the pack was dealt she got the last four cards and started the hand with 100 aces.

I stripped another deck but made the wide cards nine spots instead of aces, then switched packs, unknown

to the imperfect lady. When she got four nines twice in a row she knew the party was over.

Moral: make sure the deck is square in more ways than one.

## CHEATING AT TWO-HANDED PINOCHLE

Another type of stripper deck is used in Two-handed Pinochle. This particular swindle was pulled on the manager of a Philadelphia night club. When caught the cheat didn't go to jail but did spend quite some time in a hospital.

The ace, king, and queen of spades were removed from the deck. The other forty-five cards were trimmed along the side so they were one thirty-second of an inch narrower than before. The three selected cards were tapered at both ends; normal width in the middle.

No matter how much the deck was shuffled, the cheat could always locate the ace, king, and queen of spades by grasping the pack at the upper end and sliding his thumb and fingers along the side.

Whenever the cabaret manager dealt, the card sharp would give the deck a series of running cuts. In so doing he would bring the three "belly strippers" to the top. Since Pinochle hands are always dealt three or four at a time, the con man got the top three. When playing spades double it's an unbeatable edge to start with three different spades on every other deal.

The stripper artist invariably betrays himself by the unusual way he cuts the deck. Most such cheats pick up the entire pack and hold it in the left hand while performing a series of running cuts with the right hand.

Warning to amateur card detectives: some stripper decks are so finely made that the difference in size can hardly be seen. But even unskilled fingers can sense the unevenness along the side or edge.

## CHEATING AT GOULASH

A gambling member of Local 802, musician by trade, magician by preference, invented a wonderful card stunt that added much to his Goulash winnings.

When playing with a sixty-four-card deck, each player gets fifteen cards. Two more, the trump card and the dead card, are on the table. In front of each player is a pile of sixteen cards. Therefore, after the first trick has been played the number of cards in the hand exactly equals the number in the stock. Upon this coincidence a subtle swindle was built.

The sharpshooter would look at his original hand and quickly arrange it so all the melding cards were near the top. After the initial trick had been played, and a card drawn from the stock, the cheat would call attention to a mistake in the score. While the figures were being checked he would lay his hand face down on the table.

After the planted error had been corrected, the gyp artist would pick up, not the hand he had been dealt, but the stock pile. Knowing what melds he was going to draw, he knew which cards to hold, which to throw away. Since all the melding cards were on top of the stock, he formed his combinations quickly, thus making many more lays than would otherwise have been possible.

The melody maker no longer plays Pinochle, but still plays the piccolo. The leader decided that cheating at cards wasn't a sufficiently heinous crime to warrant dismissal from the union.









UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



112 375

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY